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The 'silent majority': A trump card in elections



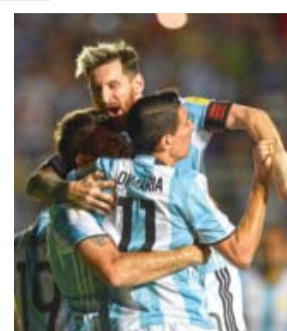
CEO: Red Sea 'megacity' an example for Saudi reforms



Door-to-door book salesman takes his knocks in Saudi Arabia



Messi magic puts Argentina back on World Cup track



## GOVT EYES TAXING REMITTANCES, PRIVATIZING HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS

PETITION AGAINST ELECTION PANEL REJECTED • OPPOSITION VOWS COMEBACK



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40 PAGES NO: 17053 150 FILS

### IMF URGES FURTHER SUBSIDY REFORMS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait must enact further subsidy reforms to trim its budget deficit resulting from low oil prices despite political sensitivity, the International Monetary Fund has said. Posting its first budget shortfall of \$15 billion last fiscal year following 16 years of surpluses, OPEC member Kuwait has adopted a series of austerity measures raising the prices of fuel, power and water. The state liberalized diesel and kerosene prices last year and recently hiked the cost of petrol, causing a political crisis that led to parliament being dissolved and calls for a snap election.

But even with these measures, Kuwait will need a massive KD 35 billion (\$116 billion) to finance its deficit over the next six years, the IMF said in a report released late Tuesday. In spite of the government reform measures, Kuwait's "fiscal and external accounts have deteriorated markedly", it said. "Further subsidy reform is critical."

The report encouraged "the authorities to move ahead with their plans to further rationalize energy subsidies", estimated at close to \$7 billion in last year's budget. It also called for controls on the wage bill and for raising non-oil revenues. Earlier this year, Cabinet approved a comprehensive plan aimed at subsidy reforms, economic diversification and controlling the wage bill, which accounts for almost half of public spending.

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**KUWAIT:** Opposition supporters attend a campaign meeting on Tuesday. Opposition groups are aiming for a comeback in parliament after a four-year election boycott, seeking to reverse what they see as the deteriorating political situation in the state. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By A Saleh and B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The government is planning to impose taxes on expats' remittances and companies, and privatize healthcare and education. According to informed government sources, a special ministerial committee has already prepared a package of economic and financial reform legislations to be presented by the new Cabinet and referred to the new parliament in mid-December.

The sources explained that the government aims to start executing its economic reform plan early and that it expects fierce confrontation in this regard with the new parliament. But it insists on pushing ahead with economic reform as the most important topic on the government's agenda, along with security and the GCC security pact.

The sources stressed that the government believes that privatizing education and healthcare is a must, while the opposition considers this as unconstitutional. The sources also emphasized that the health sector's privatization is inevitable and that hospital management would be offered to international specialized companies, starting with Jaber Hospital. The sources added that school privatization would experimentally start with one school per educational area.

Moreover, the sources said the government will also propose cancelling the current form of subsidies and direct them only to those with limited income. "The agenda also includes imposing a 10 percent tax on companies and a 5 percent tax on expats' money transfers," the sources concluded.

Separately, the administrative court yesterday rejected a petition claiming that the formation of the election committee was illegal and urged the court to abolish it.

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**KUWAITI BREAKFAST** 5.950 KD  
OMELETTE, FOUL, LEBNEH, CHICKEN LIVER, FRESH VEGETABLE, QIMAR, DARABEEL, BAQSAM, JAM & HONEY, SERVED WITH TANDOR BREAD

**LEBANESE BREAKFAST** 5.950 KD  
FIRED EGG, GRILLED HALLOUM, SAUSAGE, LEBNEH "TRADITIONAL LEANNESS", MAKDOOS, COLD CUT, QIMAR & HONEY. SERVED WITH LEBANESE BREAD

**JORDANIAN BREAKFAST** 4.900 KD  
WHOLE EGG, FOUL, FALAFEL, MUSABAHA, WHITE CHEESE, OILVE OIL, ZATAR, SERVED WITH TANDOR BREAD

**INDIAN BREAKFAST** 4.750 KD  
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# NEW

## Tassoura Breakfast



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**MARRAKESH:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met separately with President of Iraq Dr Fuad Masum, and with Burkina Faso's President Rock Marc Christian Kabore on Tuesday. The meetings came on the sidelines of the UN's 22nd session of Conference of Parties (COP 22) on climate change, held in Marrakesh, Morocco. —KUNA

## GCC LABOR MINISTERS TO UNIFY LABOR MARKET: SUBAIH SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY APPROVED

**RIYADH:** The GCC Council of Labor and Social Development Ministers discussed unification of GCC labor market and creation of job opportunities for GCC citizens, a Kuwaiti minister said yesterday. Kuwaiti Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Affairs Hind Al-Subaih said, at the conclusion of the Ministers' 33rd meeting, that teams of experts were to be formed: one to find means of naturalizing foreign laborers, while the second to tackle unifying domestic labor regulations among the GCC countries.

The meeting also pointed out that vocational training and education should be subordinate to labor markets' requirements, Subaih said. In addition, the meeting discussed the possibility for having new laborers to sit written and skill examinations before entering fore work. All these discussions to setting up a joint labor market should be realized within the next three years, with regular meetings every month, the minister pointed out.

### Strategies

The ministers discussed during their meeting joint strategies in the field of labor and

social development, most importantly the realization of one GCC citizenship concept where GCC laborers can move between GCC countries without any restrictions.

They discussed the status of foreign workers in their countries, the challenges facing their directors, as well as the development goals for the year 2030.

The Council of Labor and

### Development

The GCC social and labor ministers have endorsed during their meeting a social development strategy to give new impetus to social development action in the region, Subaih had affirmed late Tuesday. The strategy includes 32 initiatives and the meeting formed a team of experts to implement these initiatives, Subaih said in a statement following the meeting held in the Saudi capital.

These initiatives were distributed to the GCC member states to be a roadmap, she said. She stated that the ministers discussed the unified law on the handicapped, indicating that the law was reviewed by the team before being endorsed by GCC leaders. The GCC states' visions on boosting the voluntary action were also covered in the meeting, she said.

The minister revealed that the GCC secretariat will hold a forum in the first quarter of 2017, with the aim of unifying efforts and discussing means of activating the role of voluntary centers to attract youth for participation in several acts. The meeting's agenda included several topics aiming to enhance the joint GCC action and implement the GCC supreme council's resolutions pertaining to social affairs. —KUNA



**RIYADH:** Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Affairs Hind Al-Subaih attends the 33rd GCC Labor Ministers meeting in Riyadh yesterday. —KUNA

Saudi minister of labor and social development Mufrej Al-Haqabani said during the meeting, that concluded yesterday, that it is essential to form a team to realize this goal; in addition to job creation and the establishment of a joint GCC market. The ministers also dis-

ussed the status of foreign workers in their countries, the challenges facing their directors, as well as the development goals for the year 2030. The Council of Labor and



**MANAMA:** This photo released by the Interior Ministry yesterday shows Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah (right) attending a meeting with his GCC counterparts in Manama, Bahrain yesterday.

## GCC INTERIOR MINISTERS MEET TO DISCUSS SECURITY

**MANAMA:** Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah discussed in meetings with GCC Interior ministers the regional security issues and means of boosting mutual cooperation at the security level.

On the sidelines of the 'Arabian Gulf Security I Exercise' closing ceremony, Khaled praised the level of security preparedness of the GCC states amid the challenges facing the region. He stressed the role of the security forces and the citizens in the GCC for the safety of the member states.

The Interior Minister arrived in

Manama yesterday, heading a high security delegation including Ministry of Interior Undersecretary Lieutenant General Sulaiman Al-Fahad and several senior officials of the Interior Ministry.

On arrival, Sheikh Mohammad stressed that the drill enhances the level of security preparedness of the GCC states amid tremendous challenges facing the region. The minister reaffirmed that the exercise sends a message that the six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) support each other against any threat. The exercise comes in implementation of the directives of GCC leaders. —KUNA



**MARRAKECH:** Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Palestinian Prime Minister Dr Rami Alhmdallah. —KUNA

## FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS PALESTINIAN PM

**MARRAKECH:** Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met Palestinian Prime Minister Dr Rami Alhmdallah on the sidelines of the 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP 22) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Marrakech, Morocco between Nov 7-18.

They discussed the developments of the situation in the Palestinian territories, as well as Arab and international efforts to spread permanent and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. They also tackled issues of common interest.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Oil Anas Al-Saleh,

Director of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's office Ahmad Al-Fahad, Amiri Diwan Advisor Mohammad Abulassan and Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah. Also attended the meeting were head of economic and political affairs at the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Fawaz Al-Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah and Kuwait's Ambassador to Morocco Abdullatif Al-Yehya. —KUNA

## GCC DEFENSE MEETING CONCLUDES IN RIYADH

**RIYADH:** The GCC joint defense council discussed Tuesday the latest developments in the region, including the challenges facing Gulf countries. The council also stressed, in a conclusion of the 15th GCC defense ministerial meeting in Riyadh, the importance of boosting the joint action, and accelerating the completion of various defense integration requirements in order to live up to future challenges and threats.

The council's members also expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the sponsorship of the GCC joint action by member-countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and King Salman bin Abdulaziz's presidency of the council's current term, which had a great impact on enhancing the march of Gulf joint action.

Major-General Khalifa Al-Kaabi, assistant secretary-general of military affairs, mentioned that the council has reviewed the steps taken to implement the unified military commandship and its affiliated unites, in addition to completion of its required facilities and equipment.

The council has also reviewed the military committee's proposal on raising public awareness toward the Gulf national identity through promoting the military marches and accomplishments of member-countries, Kaabi said, praising GCC's various media efforts in that regard through holding symposiums and lectures, and organizing Gulf week events and field trips to Gulf joint action related-facilities.

The members also discussed the strategic dialogue and cooperation between GCC countries and the United States in line with the outcomes of the Camp David meeting, which include promoting and enhancing the military and defense strategic partnership with Washington to ensure stability in the Gulf region.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah headed the Kuwaiti delegation in the 15th GCC defense ministerial meeting accompanied by Deputy Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Abdullah Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah, and senior officials in the Army. —KUNA

## US INT'L TRADE OFFICIAL CONCLUDES VISIT TO KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** Acting Undersecretary of Commerce for International Trade, Ken Hyatt, led a delegation of 15 US companies on a safety and security industry trade mission to Kuwait, November 13-14. The mission introduced US firms to Kuwait's security market, connected US companies with potential local agents, and allowed participating firms to interact with officials from various Kuwaiti ministries involved in this sector.

"There is a long history of commercial ties between the United States and Kuwait, as well as a strong partnership in many areas including defense cooperation," Hyatt said. "Companies represented on this delegation offer state-of-the-art technology in the safety and security sector and are well-positioned to enter the Kuwaiti market."

US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman participated in several of the

trade mission meetings. "This trade mission was a great opportunity to introduce US safety and security firms to key decision-makers at different ministries that we believe can benefit from US technology and services. The delegates were very pleased with the connections they made as they look to enter and expand their business in Kuwait."

The delegation met with the Ministries of Interior and Defense, the Kuwait National Guard, and the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation during the trade mission, and learned about upcoming procurement opportunities, the process to bid on tenders, and established contacts within these government entities. They also had customized individual meetings with potential agents. A networking reception allowed for additional interaction with prospective partners. As the defense and security markets continue to grow global-

ly, Kuwait is a market of opportunity as it implements a country-wide plan to significantly increase investment in safety and security equipment through 2020.

The trade mission delegation included a diverse group of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and large corporations. Included in the group were: Ameristar Perimeter Security, Applied Concepts Inc, Comm-Port Technologies Inc, DFNDR Armor, Digital Globe, ENODO Global Inc, High Impact Technology, Kratos Defense and Security Solutions, Modular Systems Division, Maxxess Systems Inc, Navajo Fabrics, SureFire, Tracer Technology Systems Inc, Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) and Zanstra Sat. For more information about the trade mission and if you would like to get in touch with any of these companies please contact the US Embassy's Commercial section at office.kuwaitcity@trade.gov.



Members of the US safety and security trade mission delegation.



## 127,408 ELIGIBLE VOTERS IN 4TH CONSTITUENCY

**KUWAIT:** The total electorate for the upcoming elections due on November 26 stands at 483,186, including 230,430 males and 252,756 females. The number of eligible voters in the fourth constituency had reached 127,408 with 67,914 females. The current figure is an increase by 13,723 voters which is around 2.84 percent from the numbers registered in the previous elections in July of 2016. The fourth constituency represent 26.36 percent of the total number of voters nationwide.

Voters of this constituency are residents of 18 areas: Farwaniya with 5,346 (including 2,253 females), Al-Ferdous with 17,643 (including 8,900 females), Al-Omariya with 5,225 (including 2,652 females), Al-Rabiya with 5,750 (including 2,941 females), Al-Rigaiya and Al-Andalous with 8,197 (with 4,846 including females), and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh with 4,922 (including 2,244 females).

The constituency also consists of Sabah Al-Nasser with 7,679 (including 4,643 females), Al-Rehab with 1,677 (including 4,107 females), Al-Adhailiya with 20 male voters only, Al-Adhailiya with 13,468 (with 7,544 females), Ishbiya with 1,488 (including 738 females), Abdullah Al-Mubarak with 4,014 (including 1,754 females), new Jahra area with 23,857 (including 13,304 females), Al-Sulaibiya and government housing areas with 2,061 (including 1,842 females), Saad Al-Abdullah city with 4,416 (including 1,742 females), and Jahra and Al-Bar with 19,215 (including 10,081 females). No voters were registered in Al-Shadidiya and Saihad Al-Awazim.

### Education

Candidates of the fourth constituency for the National Assembly elections for the 15th legislative term, slated for 26 November 2016, are predominantly have high levels of education. About 48 percent of them 40-49 years old. Out of the total 116 nominees of the constituency, as the registration ended for the race, there are 68 (58.62 percent) with university degrees; nineteen (16.37 percent) carry diplomas; eighteen (15.51 percent) are high school graduates, and ten (8.62 percent) completed the intermediate school.

Among the 68 nominees with academic degrees, 11 have PhDs in education, law, family medicine, accounting, business administration, political science, and teaching methodology. Twelve nominees have MAs in military sciences, economy, law, libraries, information documents, Islamic studies, strategic management, environmental engineering, and psychological and educational guidance.

Forty-five BA holding nominees studied history, aviation science, law, social work, electronic engineering, electrical engineering, architectural engineering, surgery, economic geography, accounting and political sciences. The 19 candidates with diplomas are specialized in business administration, electronic engineering, military sciences, police science, or studied at the Religious Institute.

As for the candidates of the fourth constituency in the 2013 parliamentary elections, they were 114; Fifty-five of them (48-24 percent) had university degrees; Twenty (17.45 percent) had diplomas; Thirty-one (27.19 percent) were high school graduates, and seven (6.14

percent) candidates completed the intermediate school.

Among the 55 nominees with university degrees, 10 had PhDs in e-government, modern history, Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), strategic philosophy, philosophy of business administration, education, political science, economy and oral and dental surgery.

Thirteen candidates with MAs were qualified in management, public law, international and diplomatic relations, project management, military sciences, Islamic studies, fundamentals of education, and business administration.

BA nominees, 32, were specialized in physical education, medicine, surgery, law, science, Sharia, education, sociology, business administration, social work, law, and civil engineering. The twenty diploma candidates studied fire science, military sciences, police science, electronics, business administration, engineering, civilian aircraft maintenance, medical emergencies, and aviation science.

### 2012 elections

In the 2012 elections, candidates of the Fourth Constituency were 97. Nominees with university degrees hit 44 (45.36 percent), the same figure of the ones with diplomas and the high school graduates together, 22 candidates (22.68 percent) and 23 (23.71 percent) respectively. Predominantly, most candidates were 40-49 years old. Eight candidates (8.24 percent) completed the intermediate school.

Nine of the 44 nominees with academic degrees had PhDs in economy, business administration, information management, distance learning, philosophy, mechanical engineering, medicine, leadership, education policies, and sociology. Nine nominees studied law, teaching methodology, quality management, military sciences, public law, and international relations.

Twenty-six BA holding candidates were qualified in the Arabic language, law, education, Sharia, political science, economy, business administration, accounting, commerce, social work and industrial engineering.

The 22 nominees with diplomas had were specialized in military sciences, management, secretarial work, health sciences, mechanical engineering, electronics, medical emergencies, social work, technology, safety and security, and accounting, or studied at the Teachers' Institute.

### Age

In terms of age, 56 of the Fourth Constituency nominees for the 2016 elections are 40-49 years old, 48.27 percent of the total candidates. Forty-seven (40.5 percent) were 50 years old or over, and 13 (11.20 percent) were 30-39 years old.

In the 2013 elections, 53 candidates (46.49 percent) were 40-49 years old; 46 ones (40.35 percent) were 50 years old or over; fifteen nominees (13.15 percent) were 30-39 years old. Candidates for the 2012 elections, included 50 nominees (51.54 percent) were 40-49 years old; 26 ones (26.80 percent) were 50 years old or over; and twenty-one nominees (21.64 percent) were 30-39 years old. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti opposition leader and candidate Jamaan Al-Harbash speaks during a campaign meeting in Kuwait City Tuesday evening. Kuwaiti opposition groups are aiming for a comeback in parliament after a four-year election boycott, seeking to reverse what they see as the deteriorating political situation in the Gulf state. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## THE 'SILENT MAJORITY': A TRUMP CARD IN ELECTIONS

**KUWAIT:** It is interesting to see with every parliamentary elections that there are some people who are 'silent' and not interested in voting for candidates, and if they do vote they would surely turn some tables. Candidates try their best to bring those silent people and lure them to vote and exercise their right for the upcoming parliamentary elections of November 26 in order to determine the nature of the next parliament through adoption of numerous realistic programs that cope with the current pressing regional, domestic and international issues, besides meeting ambitions of this segment.

Such group of people are called differently in every country, where some call them the 'Silent Majority', 'Hesitant or Negative' and in Egypt they are called the 'Couch Party'. This category of silent people are estimated between 10-50 percent according to semi-official statistics as their par-

ticipation is linked to their mood, timing of the elections and to the nature of issues being addressed on the political and media arenas.

### Nonexistent

Political researcher and academician Dr Ayed Al-Mannaa said that the silent majority in its political approach does not exist in Kuwait, however, there is a large number of people who have no interest in politics or in elections, but can make a change in the elections. He added that such group is also found in the rest of the world and is becoming a target for candidates once they decided to break their silence and take part in presidential or parliamentary elections' process.

Manaa attributed their rejection to take part to psychological, political and religious matters or to the failure of politicians to reach out for them and lure them into participating. He

said that such hesitant or silent group could heavily impact the elections and determine the identity of the next parliament should they decide to go ahead and vote. He pointed out that the single-vote system has given a big incentive for the voter, a matter that prompted candidates to seriously think of snatching votes of all with no exception.

### Negative

Meanwhile, Professor of Political Sociology Dr Mohammad Al-Rumaihi said that the concept of silent majority has a negative consequence on the entire society and on the political reality in particular, saying such a group has no interest in politics and does not want to contribute to it. He asserted the role of the individual to actively take part in the development of the country, chiefly in the political process, calling for selecting the best candidate. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Kuwaitis gather at the election headquarters of fourth constituency candidate Osama Al-Munawer. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## KFSD ON ALERT TO GUARANTEE SMOOTH PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) has made all arrangements and preparations for the National Assembly (parliament) elections due on November 26. Head of the Hawalli Fire Department Brigadier Mohammad Al-Mahmeed, who is also KFSD's General Coordinator for the National Assembly Elections, told KUNA that all precautions are taken to supervise the democratic process with cooperation with all concerned bodies.

The KFSD will distribute its fire engines on schools used as ballot stations since they open early in the morning until the official results are announced, Mahmeed said yesterday. He stressed that they are always on alert and have made maximum preparations to deal with any emergencies, around the clock. He also hoped that the elections would proceed smoothly, urging all parties to cooperate with the Directorate's staff to provide due protection for all.

Meanwhile, Deputy Director General for Prevention Sector at the KFSD, Brigadier Khalid Abdullah Fahad, said

that they had issued 120 licenses for electoral headquarters, which included tents. These were offered according to certain specifications and conditions, mainly related to providing the highest level of safety.

The KFSD spares no effort, and take the necessary measures to secure a smooth electoral process, head of the Public Relations and Media at the KFSD Colonel Khalil Al-Amir said. He added that firemen are wielding enormous efforts to successfully implement plan set for securing the elections, as well as boosting the public's awareness on dealing with fire emergencies.

As per law 20/2012, the first 10 candidates with most votes in each constituency win seats in the National Assembly. Voters can only vote for one candidate per the constituency they are registered in. Up to 363 candidates, including 15 women, are standing for the elections. Eligible voters are 483,186 voters. More than 4,000 Interior Ministry personnel are entrusted with securing the elections. — KUNA



# CONDOLENCES

## Al-Alyan Family

convey their deepest condolences to

## Al-Awadhi family

on the sad demise of

## Khaled Abdullah Mohammed Al-Awadhi

who passed away on November 15th 2016

*May Allah Almighty bestow His mercy on him*





**KUWAIT:** Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and other officials inaugurate Kuwait's 41st International Book Fair. —KUNA photos



**Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah interacts with children during the Kuwait's 41st International Book Fair's inauguration ceremony.**

## INT'L BOOK FAIR PROMOTES ARAB CULTURE: INFO MINISTER

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's 41st International Book Fair will be instrumental in the development of culture and education in the Arab world, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah said yesterday.

Sheikh Salman made the remark in a speech he delivered to open Kuwait's 41st

International Book Fair, which goes on until November 26th with participation of 565 publishers representing 30 Arab and foreign nations.

"Kuwait recently celebrated the opening of the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, which is a cultural monument that will link the country with vast civilizations and cultures all

across the globe," the Minister of Information noted. On the book fair, he said that it is a 'cultural milestone', since it features a slew of activities and events that help promote cultural knowledge and interaction.

Meanwhile, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information Tarek Al-Merzem said that Kuwait is proud to hold this exhibition, which

includes various activities and lectures. He also noted that Kuwait has hosted this book fair for 41 consecutive years, which underscores its support of literature. Furthermore, Merzem added that the turnout for the event has "exceeded expectations", thanking the organizers for their impeccable efforts to put together this book fair.

Similarly, Secretary-General of the National Council of Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Ali Al-Yoha noted that the addition of social media has resulted in increased efficiency when it comes to services. He also highlighted the presence of major government bodies and institutions, which has augmented the enormity of the event. —KUNA

## GULF BANK SPONSORS FIRST AMIDEAST INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK SEMINAR

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank is pleased to have sponsored the first International Education Week seminar event by AMIDEAST, which was held on 15

November 2016 at the Marina Crescent Hotel in Salmiya. The seminar, entitled "Educational, Entrepreneurial and Volunteer



Opportunities for Youth Empowerment", aimed at enabling representatives from different youth institutions to identify available opportunities and options for Kuwaiti youth to enhance their skills and achieve more for themselves, their families, and their community. Laila Al-Qatami, Assistant General Manager for Corporate Communications, at Gulf Bank said: "At Gulf Bank, our Corporate Social Responsibility program (CSR) is committed to sponsoring events that give back to Kuwait and society. One of our main CSR pillars is to support events that empower our Kuwaiti youth, and in particular, educational and entrepreneurial programs. We believe that by investing in these youth programs, we are contributing to building and developing human capital for our future. As such, we believe that this seminar was beneficial to the participants for the betterment of their futures and to better serve Kuwait."

The seminar was open to the public and hosted over 150 guests comprised of students and professionals from various fields and backgrounds. Amongst the other entities and institutions that took part of this event were: the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, US Embassy, KAFO (Kuwaiti Achievers for Future Opportunities), LOYAC, INJAZ, AIESEC (Activating the Leadership Potential of Young People), Spread the Passion, The Protégés, Let's Help Kuwait, The Training Gate, in addition to youth alumni who have graduated from US State Department-funded programs.

AMIDEAST is leading American non-profit organization engaged in international education, training and development activities in the MENA region. AMIDEAST established operations in Kuwait in 1992, and has since offered educational opportunities to over 50,000 students.



**PAAET's Official Spokesperson Fatima Al-Azmi (left) and ACICO CEO Ghossoun Al-Khaled.**



**(From left) Head of Dubai University Professor Essa Al-Bastaki, PAAET's Official Spokesperson Fatima Al-Azmi, and Dr Talal Al-Huraiji from Saudi Arabia.**

## PARTICIPANTS HAIL PAAET'S HEADING GLOBAL CONFERENCE

**KUWAIT:** In a statement commenting on the Heading Global conference hosted by the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), head of Dubai University Professor Essa Al-Bastaki hailed the meeting which discussed sustainable development, smart cities, smart learning, healthcare, roads and various aspects of life. Also speaking at the conference, Dr Talal Al-Huraiji from Saudi Arabia said the conference was a first step towards holding fur-

ther similar events and investing in youth potentials and the knowledge economy. He added that the conference was a great chance to exchange expertise.

ACICO CEO Ghossoun Al-Khaled expressed hope that the conference's recommendations would be put into practice in order to achieve a better future for Kuwait and other GCC states. Deputy Chairman of Total UAE Sultan Al-Hajji spoke about the role of the youth in the future of the knowl-

edge economy and how they can prepare themselves to cope with the latest technological developments.

Boubyan Bank deputy CEO Abdullah Al-Tuwaijri spoke about smart communities and sustainability. The head of the conference's scientific committee Professor Elias Carayannis from George Washington University said that the conference was the first of its kind in the region and that it focuses on sustainable and comprehensive smart development.



**KUWAIT:** Samar Khleif, Country Director of AMIDEAST delivers her speech. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



**Assistant undersecretary of youth development at the ministry of youth Meshal Al-Subaie**



**Fatima Al-Mosawi, Executive Manager of Kuwait Achievers for Future Opportunities (KAFO) project.**

## KIB HONORED FOR EXCELLENCE IN LABOR NATIONALIZATION

**KUWAIT:** In recognition of the Bank's continuous efforts to support national labor and invest in local talents, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) was honored at the 15th ceremony recognizing excellence in labor nationaliza-

tion policies in the private sector across the GCC. The event was held under the auspice of the 33rd Session of the Council of Ministers of Labor

and Council of Ministers of Social Affairs of GCC States, which recently took place in Riyadh.

Recognizing the private sector institutions who are leading in the field of labor localization comes in line

with the GCC States' ongoing efforts to promote nationalization policies and initiatives across all sectors. It also serves to reaffirm the importance of

the private sector in encouraging and fostering local talents.

Receiving the honor on behalf of the Bank and its management, Jamal Al-Barrak, General Manager of the Investment Department at KIB said: "KIB maintains a strategic approach towards investing in the national workforce, and the Bank is committed to providing the best career opportunities in the market for promising local talents. We always strive to support, encourage and attract young professionals who aspire for a career in the banking sector. We are also committed to advancing our own employees, continuously investing in their professional growth and development." Barrak said that this latest accolade is a testament to the soundness of KIB's employment policies and its ongoing efforts to promote labor nationalization. He also pointed out that, over the past few years, KIB has succeeded in achieving one of the highest rates for nationalization of labor within the market.

From another side, the General Manager of Human Resources Department, Nigel Holmes said: "KIB believes that human resources is one of the most vital sectors within any organization. The Bank is also a strong advocate of investing in human capital, and adopts focused and targeted strategies that aim to attract, retain and develop qualified national talents."



**KUWAIT:** Jamal Al-Barrak, General Manager of the Investment Department at KIB, receives an award for excellence in labor nationalization.

**KUWAIT:** Jamal Al-Barrak, General Manager of the Investment Department at KIB, receives an award for excellence in labor nationalization.

## AMIDEAST ORGANIZES FIRST ANNUAL EVENT TO MARK INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK

**By Faten Omar**

**KUWAIT:** AMIDEAST, an American non-profit organization, held its first annual event marking International Education Week on Tuesday at Marina Hotel. The event, titled "Educational, Entrepreneurial and Volunteer Opportunities for Kuwaiti Youth Empowerment" was open to the public to highlight the effort of the premier organizations involved in various Kuwaiti youth initiatives.

During her opening speech, Samar Khleif, Country Director of AMIDEAST, said: "The focus of this seminar is on youth empowerment in Kuwait across all mechanisms for youth engagement, including through education, entrepreneurship and volunteerism." She added that AMIDEAST is keen on sustainable development of youth and promoting youth abilities.

Assistant undersecretary of youth development at the ministry of youth Meshal Al-Subaie said: "Investment in the human element is the base to achieve progress and prosperity. And this is what the ministry of youth is planning to do." He encouraged young Kuwaitis to apply for the award for

youth excellence and creativity. He highlighted the award's keenness on youth and their projects, giving priority to their ambition as well as promoting their capabilities as the country's future and real wealth. Subaie added that the financial value of the award is KD 10,000 over 10 categories.

On behalf of the Amiri Diwan, Fatima Al-Mosawi, Executive Manager of Kuwait Achievers for Future Opportunities (KAFO) project, said: "KAFO is a national database, which is considered to be one of the achievements of the ongoing activities of the National Youth Project that is under the supervision of the Amiri Diwan as per the directives of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah." She added that the aim of KAFO is to establish and develop a database of qualified Kuwaiti youth in different academic and professional fields. KAFO allows national competencies to have long professional relationships with each other and creates channels of communication and build bridges of professional relationships.

The event's premium sponsor was Alghanim Industries and Gulf Bank, with Al-Rai newspaper as the media sponsor.

The organizations involved included the following: Ministry of Youth Affairs, Amiri Diwan (KAFO project), US Embassy, Injaz, LOYAC, the Proteges, En.V, Spread the Passion, Women Entrepreneurship Network, AIESEC, Let's Help Kuwait, Training Gate, Kuwait Voluntary Center (Wesal Media Team) and alumni of the YES Exchange Program administered by AMIDEAST on behalf of the US Department of State.

AMIDEAST is a leading American non-profit organization engaged in international education, training and development activities in the Middle East and North Africa. AMIDEAST made its entry into Kuwait in 1992. It has provided advice on various US educational opportunities to over 50,000 students since its inception. AMIDEAST Kuwait administers most major exams required for study in the US, including the TOEFL, GRE and SAT. According to AMIDEAST, its programs and services touch the lives of half a million individuals a year - improving educational opportunities and quality, strengthening local institutions, and developing language and professional skills critical for success in the global economy.



## RAIN EXPECTED TILL END OF MONTH

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Meteorologist Essa Ramadan predicted Kuwait will witness moderate to strong rain from next week till the end of the month. Ramadan added that following a period of dry weather since October, the Wasm rainfall would exceed 30 mm and would help annual desert plants bloom. Ramadan forecast western, eastern and central Saudi areas, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE and Iraq will receive rain from Nov 23 until Nov 28 or 29, sometimes accompanied by thunder.

### Housing units

Statistics issued by the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) yesterday said the total number of housing units distributed since the beginning of the government-provided housing scheme is 128,639, including 60,608 houses, 66,563 residential land plots and

1,468 apartments. Statistics also showed that the total number of units distributed in the Mutlaa residential project so far is 11,338.

### Investigation

Kuwait Nursing Association secretary Sami Obaid Al-Mutairi urged Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi to refer the head of the nursing staff at the chest diseases hospital to investigation over the growing number of complaints filed against him by nurses, accusing him of injustice and abuse. Mutairi said that the head nurse was very partial in terms of night shifts and off days. He added he also listed certain female nurses on overtime lists while they were actually dispatched on official missions, while others who really deserve overtime were deprived of it. "He only favors his nearest and dearest," said Mutairi, calling for officially investigating the matter.

## AFRICA ACTION SUMMIT KICKS OFF IN MARRAKESH

**MARRAKESH:** The Africa Action Summit kicked off in Marrakesh, Morocco, yesterday, on the sidelines of the 22nd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 22) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah is attending the summit as Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The summit, hosted at the Royal Palace in Marrakesh, was called for by Moroccan King Mohammed VI, and is attended by several country leaders and heads of state.

It adds the momentum to the structural initiatives and projects seeking an effective confrontation of the impact of climate change on the continent, in addition to developing a model for sustainable development that responds to the expectations of the African peoples.

During an African tour last week, the Moroccan Monarch called in the Senegalese capital of Dakar for a summit on the fringe of COP 22 to crystalize a vision for defending the demands of the continent, focusing on financing and transfer of technology. Africa has been among the world regions worst-hit by the effects of climate change, the Monarch said, vowing to develop the COP 22 (Marrakesh,

November 7-18) as a conference for the continent. Addressing the COP 22 on Tuesday, His Highness the Amir reiterated Kuwait's commitment to joining in supporting the efforts exerted by the UN to combat climate change. Kuwait has voluntarily put well-studied plans, based on scientific and economic research, within its available possibilities, to rehabilitate its oil installa-

tions, as its oil sector seeks to adopt a new strategy, founded on scientific and economic grounds, that aim to limit emissions, His Highness the Amir added. His Highness the Amir stressed that Kuwait is about to complete the constitutional procedures for the ratification of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. —KUNA



**MARRAKESH:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah attends the summit. — KUNA



Tahir Khan



Professor Andreas Roposch

## PORTLAND HOSPITAL CONSULTANTS PARTICIPATE AT PAEDIATRIC CONFERENCE

**KUWAIT:** The Portland Hospital for woman and children, one of HCA Healthcare UK hospitals, is proud to announce that two of its consultant orthopaedic surgeons, Professor Andreas Roposch and Tahir Khan, will be participating at the 5th Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgery Conference held by Al-Razi Orthopaedic Hospital in cooperation with the Ministry of Health starting today, November 17th for three days at Sheikhha salwa Al Sabah Hall, in the Marina Crescent.

Professor Andreas Roposch, Director of the London Hip Ultrasound Course and Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon at Portland Hospital, and Tahir Khan, consultant orthopaedic surgeon at the Portland Hospital and the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, will be giving lectures throughout the three days on different topics. Some are; Benign Musculoskeletal Tumors, Management of Osteogenesis Imperfecta, Updates on the Graf Method of Hip Ultrasound for DDH and Hip Arthroscopy and FA. Khan will also be participating at the Hip Arthroscopy Workshop held on day two.

## MINISTRY BOUND BY CSC DECISIONS ON TEACHER'S ALLOWANCES: OFFICIAL

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Education (MoE) is committed to paying the rent allowance difference to female expat teachers retroactively as per a Civil Service Commission (CSC) decision, MOE's Assistant Undersecretary for Financial Affairs Yousif Al-Najjar stressed. "MoE is an executive body and the ruling made by the constitutional court is mandatory and unquestionable," he said, strongly denying that the ministry is manipulating teachers. He was referring to a court ruling which ordered the ministry to pay female expatriate teachers the same allowance paid to male teachers.

"We have a decision from the CSC on adjusting expat female teachers' rent allowance from KD 90 to KD 150 retroactively at a total cost of KD 47 million," he explained, noting that MoE has asked the finance ministry to provide the sum but has not received any response yet. "The due sums will be paid sooner or later," he added, further indicated that if not paid this year, they would be paid next year after the new budget is approved in April. "This decision has nothing to do with reducing the rent allowance to KD 60," he remarked, referring to the CSC's recent decision this year to cut the monthly allowance back by KD 90.

Najjar said that the amount would be paid as soon as the money arrives from the finance ministry and that the teachers should not sue the ministry or be abused by law firms urging them to do so and waste their money, as their rights are protected by law. "MoE was not a party in the case filed by a teacher against the CSC decision, who later got a constitutional court ruling annulling it, and accordingly, CSC decided paying the difference to all expat female teachers retroactively since 2011," he explained, promising expat female teachers will get their rights in full.

## FIVE MEN ARRESTED FOR 'ILLEGAL' WASTE DISPOSAL

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Criminal detectives arrested five persons who appeared in video footage posted online while dumping trash in the stables area, which is a crime punishable by law. The suspects, four Egyptians and one Syrian, were sent to concerned authorities for further legal action.

Separately, the public cleanliness and road occupancy department at Jahra Municipality branch removed all camps that were pitched in off limits areas in Sulaibiya. The public relations department said in a statement that tours by the Municipality continue to take such actions, as 101 camps have been removed so far.

Meanwhile, the vegetable market municipality center carried out several inspection campaigns in Shuwaikh that included stores, butcher shops, supermarkets and co-ops, resulting in issuing 49 citations that varied between selling food items without health certificates, working in restaurants without health licenses and employing a worker before receiving a health certificate.

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### MAID RAPED BY EMPLOYER'S SON

**KUWAIT:** A citizen who complained to police against her Filipina housemaid for being pregnant, changed her mind when she learned it was her son who had impregnated her. The maid told police that her sponsor's son discovered she had stolen an expensive watch, so he blackmailed and raped her several times to remain silent about the theft. Police charged the son and the Filipina in two separate cases.

**Friends fight over girl**

Two men were vying for a girl, then when she preferred one over the other, they got into a fight when the man who was spurned told his friend: "You are not a man because you let a girl separate us". Police had to intervene and break up the fight.

**Bad blood**

Two citizens resorted to sticks and knives to settle their differences in Abdullah Al-Mubarak, and both were injured. Police broke up the fight and transferred them to hospital. They were charged with fighting.

**Café worker harassed**

An Egyptian man harassed a Filipina worker in a Salmiya cafe and forced her to take his phone number before leaving. The woman went to the police station and lodged a complaint. The suspect did not answer the detectives' calls, so they are looking for him.

**Pedestrian mugged**

A Pakistani man was robbed by five unknown persons near Khaitan sports club. He was restrained, his eyes were covered and his phone was stolen before the thieves fled. Investigations led police to a Somali man, who was arrested and confessed to the crime. He told them where the phone was and named his accomplices.

**Man beats up wife**

A man who had a dispute with his wife - who is now living with her parents - found her sitting next to a man in her car, so he became furious and beat her. The woman went to the police and lodged a complaint. Investigations are underway. —Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa



Al-Anbaa

### WORLDLY GAINS AND HELL

By Saad Al-Motesh

I wonder if any of you have been through what I am about to tell you. Anyway, I thought I should, because it would probably help boost public awareness and help you avoid falling for the same mistake. I used to receive calls from Asian countries where the speaker spoke bad Arabic and claimed that my mobile phone number had won a considerable amount of money and that I had to send a small amount to get the reward.

Knowing that the whole thing was nothing more than fraud, I tried to kill time by chatting with my caller. Asking about his name and learning that he was a Muslim, I tried to talk him out of such fraud by reminding him of Judgment Day, Paradise and Hell. I told him that what he was doing is theft and that I knew he did not call voluntarily, but was asked to do so by someone.

This is exactly what is happening with some Kuwaiti female voters using religion to convince other female voters to vote for certain candidates. I would like to warn all female voters who have been threatened of the Almighty's wrath unless

they vote for candidates using religion to win a parliamentary seat, that this is unacceptable intimidation. The women helping those candidates are more like the Asian callers who are being used by their bosses.

However, ladies beware that if you accept using religion and fear of Allah to intimidate voters, you should realize that Almighty Allah knows everything and will never allow people to frighten others of torture in hell to get their own worldly gains.

*I tried to talk him out of such fraud by reminding him of Judgment Day, Paradise and Hell*

—Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Anbaa

### DR MAASOUMA'S SHEEP

By Dr Saleh Al-Ojairi

In the early 1980s, my son Mohammed was preparing for his master's degree in the US, so I visited him in Colorado to check how his studies were going. It was Ramadan and we were fasting. "A female classmate is going to cook iftar for us today. Would you like to come along?" my son asked me, and I replied "Of course," because I was getting fed up of restaurant meals. "What is your colleague's name," I asked, and he told me Maasouma Al-Mubarak.

We went over after sunset and found that she had cooked a purely Kuwaiti meal including pudding, dumplings and stew with dried black lemon on top. "Where did you get the dried lemon from in America?" I asked. She told me that there was even a greater surprise. "The meat you are eating is a young lamb that we slaughtered to eat for iftar," she told me. We enjoyed the taste of Maasouma's sheep and thanked her warmly.

Years after that evening, she called me here in Kuwait. "I am Maasouma. Do you remember me?" she asked, and I instantly said yes. "How can I forget you after eating your sheep in America?" I said, and she giggled for long, before asking me to introduce her to the then minister of social affairs and labor, the late Hamad Al-Rujaib. I took her to his office and made her wait until I saw him first. In his office, the minister forgot his position and started recalling our past memories together, when we used to act onstage together. "Do you remember when I asked you what you had for lunch and you told me that you had bread and rice?" he asked me.

Our meeting went on for long, before I told him that a citizen outside wished to meet him. She was ushered in and discussed what she wanted, and we both left happily. Several years later, she became a minister, and I paid her a visit in her office to congratulate her and give her a present on the occasion. We too reminisced about our memories in the US and the sheep we ate.

Getting up to leave, she insisted on seeing me off till the front door despite my protests that I was merely a citizen and she was a minister. "You are more important than a minister," she told me. Maasouma in fact followed the Prophet's (PBUH) hadith, when he said that Allah had chosen Islam for us and asked us to fully observe good manners and be generous to make it complete. She did display good manners by seeing me out and was generous when she fed me a sheep for iftar in the US. —Translated by Kuwait Times



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) organized a successful fire drill at Kuwait University's female students' dormitory in Kaifan yesterday morning. Meanwhile, the Health and Safety Control Department at the KFSD carried out a three-day first aid training course for firefighters, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health's Emergency Medical Department and American Heart Association.



### ZAIN SPONSORS 'KAYAK 4 KUWAIT' ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS EXPEDITION

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its sponsorship of the 'Kayak 4 Kuwait' awareness expedition, which aims at raising positive awareness about the importance of preserving marine life in the Arabian Gulf. The expedition comes under the support of the Environment Public Authority (EPA). Zain's sponsorship of this expedition came in line with the company's Corporate Sustainability strategy towards the environmental sector. Zain is keen on raising awareness about the importance of preserving the environment, especially the preservation of marine life and natural resources within the Arabian Gulf area.

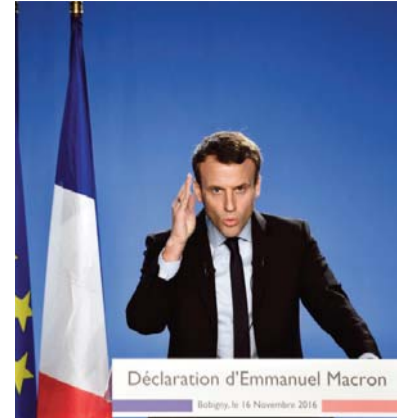
The expedition, considered the first of its kind, will feature Kuwaiti traveler Bashar Al Huneidi and his team kayaking from Kuwait across the GCC countries with the aim of reaching Oman. Kayaking is considered an ideal green sport for such an initiative that aims at raising awareness of the importance of

preserving the marine environment within the GCC countries.

As part of its Corporate Sustainability strategy, Zain also presented the Kuwait Diving Team with a fully equipped boat which the team used to achieve 800 marine preservation operations in Kuwait throughout the past years. The company also partnered with the Environment Public Authority (EPA) to distribute awareness messages about the new environmental laws aimed at preserving a green and clean environment in the country.

It is worth noting that Zain has undertaken numerous efforts to preserve the environment, including the introduction of reusable, biodegradable bags for customers to take home in order to reduce reliance on plastic bags. The company also extended its utmost environmental concern towards the technological aspect by reducing the use of unwanted printed paper and replacing it by electronic usage.





**Maverick Macron enters French presidential race**

PAKISTAN ORDERS 400 TURKS TO LEAVE AHEAD OF ERDOGAN'S VISIT



IDLIB, Syria: Rescuers and civilians inspect a destroyed building in the Syrian village of Kfar Jales, on the outskirts of Idlib, following air strikes by Syrian and Russian warplanes yesterday. — AFP

**SYRIA REGIME BOMBS REBELS AS ALEPPO FOOD AID RUNS OUT**

**ALEPPO:** Syrian government and Russian warplanes pounded rebel-held parts of northern Syria yesterday, including battered second city Aleppo, where food aid rations were all-but-exhausted after months of regime siege.

The renewed bombardment has killed at least 32 people in Aleppo in the last 24 hours, and sparked anger from Washington and the United Nations. It came as President Bashar al-Assad said in an interview that US president-elect Donald Trump could be a "natural ally" if he fights "terrorists".

Damascus considers all those who oppose Assad's government to be "terrorists" like the Islamic State group, which Trump has said should be the focus of US involvement in Syria. Damascus and its ally Russia launched a wide-ranging assault on rebels on Tuesday, shattering a month of relative calm in the rebel-held east of devastated Aleppo.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor, says at least 32 people, among them six children, have been killed in government strikes and artillery fire on besieged opposition-held districts since

Tuesday. The Independent Doctors Association, a medical group, said barrel bomb attacks had damaged two facilities it supports in eastern Aleppo: the children's hospital and the only blood bank in the area.

Medical facilities have regularly been hit, and sometimes completely destroyed, in the government's fight against rebels, though Damascus and Moscow deny they have targeted hospitals. The Observatory also reported strikes in Idlib province, in northwestern Syria, where six people were killed in the village of Kafr Jalis on Tuesday night.

**Food aid runs out in Aleppo**

"We worked through the night to lift the debris and remove the martyrs and surviving civilians, and now we're trying to remove the rubble blocking the roads," said Yahya Arja from the White Helmets civil defense in the province.

The bombardment ended a period of relative respite, particularly in eastern Aleppo, where Moscow halted air strikes on October 18 ahead of a series of brief ceasefires. The ceasefires were intended to encourage residents and

surrendering rebels to leave the east, but few did so, expressing fear of moving into government-held territory.

Food aid stockpiled in the east is all-but-exhausted, with international organizations and their local partners saying they were distributing the final rations in recent days. No aid has entered the eastern neighborhoods since government troops surrounded it in mid-July.

Once Syria's economic powerhouse, Aleppo has been ravaged by the war that has killed more than 300,000 people across the country since it started in March 2011 with anti-government protests. Assad ally Russia intervened in September last year in a bid to bolster the government, and on Tuesday said its forces were launching a "major operation" in Idlib and central Homs province, targeting IS and former Al-Qaeda affiliate Fateh al-Sham Front.

But the bombardment has been criticized by both the UN and Washington, with the General Assembly's human rights committee voting overwhelmingly on Tuesday to condemn escalating attacks on civilians. Washington said it had received reports that the latest bombing raids had damaged civilian infrastructure in rebel areas. "We strongly condemn the resumption of air strikes in Syria by the Russians as well as the Syrian regime," State Department spokeswoman Elizabeth Trudeau told reporters. "The most recent reported attacks are on five hospitals and one mobile clinic in Syria. We believe it's a violation of international law."

**Assad open to Trump alliance**

Washington was an early backer of the uprising against Assad, and has supported the rebels fighting his government. But that could change under the next administration, with Assad telling Portugal's RTP state television on Tuesday that he welcomed Trump's campaign comments suggesting Washington's involvement in Syria should be focused exclusively on fighting jihadists.

"We cannot tell anything about what he's going to do, but if... he is going to fight the terrorists, of course we are going to be ally, natural ally in that regard with the Russian, with the Iranian, with many other countries," Assad said. Washington already leads an international coalition carrying out strikes against IS in Syria and Iraq, but it does not coordinate with Damascus and Assad's government has condemned it as ineffective.

The coalition is supporting an operation by the Kurdish-Arab alliance known as the Syrian Democratic Forces to capture the IS bastion of Raqa. "We are advancing even though IS is mining the villages as they flee," SDF commander Rodi Derik told AFP yesterday in the village of Tuwaylaa, recently captured from IS. — AFP

**VOTING IN AN ELECTION 'WITH CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS'**

**BEIJING:** When Chinese voters go to the polls, it is only to pick local representatives to advise on mundane issues like rubbish collection and parking. But when Ye Jinghuan sought election in Beijing, she was treated like an enemy of the state.

Plainclothes officers tailed the 64-year old retiree as she left her home on polling day Tuesday, and she faced constant harassment from police and government officials after announcing her run, she said. The nationwide contest for spots in local legislatures, held every five years, is the only direct election in the People's Republic of China.

Authorities were eager to show off what they describe as democracy "with Chinese characteristics", with officials ushering dozens of reporters into a polling station in Xingfu, in central Beijing. Voters filled out their pink ballot papers in front of officials, ignoring a screened-off area labeled "Secret Balloting Place".

Chinese law states that anyone over 18, who has not been stripped of their political rights, can stand for election and vote. "Ethnicity, gender, party, residence, economic situation, there are no limits," crowed Liu Xiancai, who heads the Xingfu election office. But Ye's experience was different. Candidates must be backed by 10 people or nominated by their workplace to stand. But official elec-

tion committees ultimately decide who gets on the ballot. "The government can't let someone like me be a candidate," Ye said. "I would express my own thoughts. When the people's congress opens session, I would cast an opposition ballot."

**Tightening control**

Ye's platform was simple: better controls on traffic, more elder care facilities, and making it easier for constituents to contact their delegates. But her seemingly innocuous ideas provoked a strong reaction from local police, who closely monitored her behavior and prevented her meeting foreign media. The authorities' response to Ye indicates how China is tightening controls on even anodyne political expression, said Yaxue Cao of Chinachange.org, a US-based website advocating for increased democracy.

A key meeting of top Communist leadership in October called for increased ideological discipline and warned ruling party members against criticizing the official line. In a pyramidal system, the elected local representatives choose municipal delegates, who choose provincial legislators, who in turn select members of the national parliament—which is widely expected to hand Communist party General Secretary Xi Jinping a second term as president in 2018. — AFP

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## ISRAEL GIVES INITIAL BACKING TO BILL TO LEGALIZE SETTLER HOMES

**JERUSALEM:** The Israeli parliament gave initial approval yesterday to a bill to legalize thousands of West Bank settler homes, a measure drawing international anger and posing the government's biggest test since 2015 polls.

The measure, which would apply to an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 Jewish homes in the occupied West Bank, requires three more full parliamentary votes to become law. There have been reports that a behind-the-scenes compromise could see the bill now stall. The vote in the Knesset, or parliament, was 58-50. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu initially opposed the bill, fearing an international backlash and legal implications, but voted in favor yesterday.

Netanyahu faces pressure to hold his right-wing coalition together and not be seen as moving against the powerful settler movement. There has been speculation that the bill could even cause the govern-

ment to collapse-though a number of analysts caution that a compromise seems more likely for now.

The bill has been pushed by hardline members of Netanyahu's coalition who defied his pleas not to move forward, while the country's attorney general says it will never hold up in court. But those who support it say the move is urgently needed to protect a Jewish outpost in the occupied West Bank called Amona.

The outpost, where some 40 families live, is under a high court order to be demolished by December 25 because it was built on private Palestinian land. The bill however goes far beyond legalizing Amona and would allow an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 Jewish homes in the West Bank built on Palestinian land to be legalized.

Palestinian landowners would be offered compensation in exchange, but Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit says

the move would undermine private property laws. US President Barack Obama's administration says it is "deeply concerned." "This would represent an unprecedented and troubling step that's inconsistent with prior Israeli legal opinion and also break longstanding Israeli policy of not building on private Palestinian land," State Department spokeswoman Elizabeth Trudeau said.

The international community considers all Israeli settlements in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem and the West Bank to be illegal, whether they are authorized by the government or not. The Israeli government differentiates between those it has approved and those it has not. The progress of the bill, approved earlier by a committee of ministers on behalf of the government, has demonstrated the power of the settler movement.

Netanyahu's government is seen as the most right-wing in Israeli history, and key

members of his coalition advocate annexing most of the West Bank while openly opposing the idea of a Palestinian state.

Opposition leader Isaac Herzog, who heads the Labor party, said the bill contravened Israeli and international law while justifying "theft."

### Hardliner 'dictated agenda'

Education Minister Naftali Bennett, who heads the hardline Jewish Home party and has been the driving force behind the bill, has made no secret of his position. Last week after the election of Donald Trump as president in the United States, he called for the end of the idea of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the basis of years of negotiations.

He said "the era of a Palestinian state is over." Netanyahu's government currently controls 66 of the 120 seats in parliament. Finance minister Moshe Kahlon, whose centre-right Kulanu party holds 10 seats,

has been key and had initially threatened not to vote. In the end, he voted for Wednesday's initial backing but said he would withdraw support in the future if it "harms" the country's high court.

The statement was a reference to Amona and the high court ruling against it signaling that the bill could stall in the future if the outpost is not removed from it.

Some Israeli analysts have spoken of the outsized power Bennett has accumulated with the help of the settler movement, saying it could seem Netanyahu was serving in his cabinet rather than the other way around. Bennett's party has only eight seats in parliament. But both men have little interest in new elections for now, a number of analysts said. "Bennett knows that it will be difficult to have a government more right-wing than the current one," a government official told AFP on condition of anonymity. —AFP



**MOSUL:** Front line medics from the Iraqi Special Forces 2nd division and volunteers from the Slovak charity Academy of Emergency Medicine treat an Iraqi girl with a shrapnel wound at an outdoor field clinic in the Samah neighborhood on Tuesday. —AFP

## FOREIGN MEDICS TREAT CHILDREN IN IRAQ'S MOSUL

### MOUNTING CASUALTIES IN TORN CITY

**MOSUL:** Foreign medics are helping Iraqi special forces personnel treat a growing number of children wounded by intense urban warfare inside the jihadist-held city of Mosul. Car bombs, sniper fire and booby traps have led to mounting casualties in the east of the city, where advancing Iraqi troops are battling Islamic State group fighters.

Three foreign medics working with the Academy of Emergency Medicine, a Slovakian charity, have teamed up with more than a dozen Iraqi special forces medical personnel to treat wounded civilians and soldiers. Their sparsely equipped field clinic is set up in an open courtyard on the only route out for fleeing civilians.

Fewer than a dozen green cots are organized into rows, flanked by two ambulances and several crates of gauze, intravenous drips, and other medical supplies purchased with donations to AEM. Slovakian

medic Marek Adamik says most of the casualties he has treated have been from makeshift bombs or sniper fire-some "directly targeted with head shots."

The charity's country manager, Peter Reed, has just finished tending to the first civilian casualty of the day, a young girl in pink pyjamas with a shrapnel wound to her right leg.

Sporting a thick, strawberry-blond beard, the former US Marine says he came to Iraq in 2015 to join the fight against IS. But after months without seeing combat, Reed began treating wounded Kurdish peshmerga fighters before "realizing there's a need for civilian treatment on the front lines."

### 'Kids are the worst'

In the space of just three days this week, AEM and Iraqi medics treated a 12-year-old whose right leg was nearly blown off by a mortar round, a scrawny boy hurt when

he picked up a mine, and a girl wounded in a car bombing that killed her entire family.

"Kids. Kids are the worst," Reed says, shaking his head. "Adults and small children stay inside. Kids- especially boys-like to go outside and be adventurous." Wounded civilians are brought to the field clinic in the back of pick-up trucks or on the hoods of armored Humvees. It is still too dangerous for their few ambulances to make the one-kilometer journey to the front line.

AEM staff and Iraqi paramedics work together to stop bleeding or dress wounds, with Reed often barking orders in English that a stocky Iraqi man translates to his colleagues. Urgent cases-like the young mortar fire victim-are transported by ambulance to hospital in Arbil, the Kurdish regional capital, some 80 kilometers to the east.

To relax after treating patients, Reed and fellow American medic

Derek Coleman, 27, guzzle down energy drinks and munch on chocolate. "I ended up here as a foreign fighter, and then I saw there was a need for medical (work)," Coleman, from New Jersey, says.

Lifting his grey baseball cap to pat down his messy chestnut hair, he tells AFP he is bracing himself for a wave of civilian casualties as Iraqi troops push deeper into Mosul. "Also, if there's no fighting to keep Daesh busy, they may have more opportunity to target civilians," he adds, using an Arabic acronym for IS that its members consider pejorative.

Reed, Coleman, and Adamik spend all day with Iraqi first aiders, then bed down with them in a nearby abandoned home to the sound of intermittent gunfire or shelling. Even on slow days, they look worn out by the afternoon. "Less patients mean you remember certain ones much more vividly," says Reed. —AFP

## IRAN'S TOP LEADERS MOVE TO CALM CONCERNS OVER TRUMP ELECTION

**TEHRAN:** Iran's two top leaders - its president and the country's supreme leader - both sought yesterday to calm concerns in Iran over the future of Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers in the wake of Donald Trump's election for US president.

President Hassan Rouhani said the country will remain committed and loyal to the deal, regardless of the outcome of the US election. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Iran was indifferent to the result of the US vote, insisting the Iranian nation was "not worried" about the future and was ready for any fallout from the US election.

Trump's much publicized criticism of the nuclear deal and his campaign vows to renegotiate the terms and increase enforcement of the deal that put off the threat of Tehran developing atomic weapons has sent jitters across Iran. "If a president is changed here and there, it has no impact on the will of Iran," Rouhani said in a speech broadcast live on state TV from the city of Karaj, where he was visiting. "Based on the deal, we implement our commitment."

### World is not controlled by one entity

Without mentioning Trump by name, Rouhani said that "the world is not under the will of a single individual and party. The reality of the world will impose many things on extremists." "Nobody should imagine it is possible to play with Iran," he added. The deal, which went into effect in January, forced Iran to pull back from the brink of nuclear weapons capacity in exchange for an end to many of the US and

European sanctions that crippled Iran's economy.

Iran has denied that the sanctions affected its economy in any way. It has been largely respected despite undiminished US-Iranian tensions throughout the Middle East, including their support for rival sides in Syria and Yemen's civil wars.

Trump's exact plans on the nuclear deal are vague but any renegotiation would be difficult - Iran has no incentive to reopen talks over a deal it is satisfied with. And none of the other countries in the seven-nation accord has expressed interest in picking apart an understanding that took more than a decade of stop-and-go diplomacy and almost two full years of negotiations to complete.

Iran's supreme leader, who has final say on all state matters in Iran, said in remarks on state TV that Iran was indifferent to Trump's election victory. "We neither mourn nor cheer because it makes no difference to us. We do not have any judgment on the election," Khamenei said. "We are also not worried. And we are ready for any possible incident."

"The United States is the same country and over the past 37 years any of the US major parties that came to power brought us no good, while their evil was always directed toward the Iranian nation," Khamenei added.

Iran and the US have had no diplomatic relations since 1979, when militant students stormed the US Embassy in Tehran, took 52 Americans hostage and held them for 444 days after Washington refused to hand over Iran's toppled shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, for trial in Iran. —AP



**TEHRAN:** In this photo released by an official website of the office of the Iranian Presidency, President Hassan Rouhani, right, meets with Chinese Defense Minister Chang Wanquan, left, at his office on Tuesday. —AP

## A MONTH INTO MOSUL ASSAULT, TOUGH FIGHTING STILL AHEAD

**BAGHDAD:** Iraqi forces have broken into jihadist-held Mosul and recaptured neighborhoods inside the city, but a month into their offensive, there are still weeks or more of potentially heavy fighting ahead.

Iraq launched the massive operation to recapture Mosul, which has been held by the Islamic State group since 2014, on October 17, advancing on the city from the north, east and south. Iraq's elite Counter-Terrorism Service and regular army soldiers have retaken areas on its eastern side from IS, but forces on other fronts have yet to enter the city. "Fighting inside of the city is likely to grow increasingly more difficult as the (Iraqi forces) progress through Mosul's more modern eastern neighborhoods towards its older, denser centre," said Patrick Martin, an Iraq analyst at the Institute for the Study of War.

The jihadists' "use of tunnels, human shields, suicide car bombs, and other attack capabilities will become harder to counter as fighters are forced into closer quarters by the nature of the city's geography," Martin said.

But Michael Knights of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy cautioned that the nature of IS defenses deeper in the city remains unclear. "We don't know if the current fighting represents the most heavily fortified (and) defended neighborhoods or a precursor to the toughest fighting" in the old

city, Knights said. "We could be fighting through a hard crust with a soft inside, or it could be all hard," he said.

### Third of eastern Mosul retaken

The United States has said that hundreds of IS fighters have been killed since the offensive began, but those figures cannot be independently confirmed. Iraqi forces have not released information about their casualties. Interior ministry spokesman Saad Maan has said that more than a third of eastern Mosul has been retaken, but that would still leave a significant part of the east and all of the west-which is expected to put up the toughest resistance-in IS hands.

Iraqi Kurdish forces played a role in the early days of the Mosul operation, but said after recapturing the town of Bashiqa to the city's east that their offensive participation in the battle is over. Interior ministry forces, including the elite Rapid Response Division, as well as soldiers on the southern front have had the longest way to go to reach Mosul, but they are now nearing the airport on its southern outskirts.

A US-led coalition is carrying out air and artillery strikes in support of Iraqi forces, and said it has targeted the jihadists with thousands of bombs, missiles, rockets and shells. —AFP

## IS TIGHTENS GRIP IN SYRIA BASTION RAQA AS ASSAULT NEARS

**BEIRUT:** Internet cafes closed down, travel bans and new checkpoints: residents say jihadists are trying to tighten their grip on power in Raqa as US-backed forces near the Islamic State group's Syrian bastion.

A Kurdish-Arab alliance called the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) began an operation to recapture the northern city on November 5. Since then, residents say IS has tried to seal its stronghold off from the outside world, imposing a media blackout on the city's population of more than 300,000.

The flow of information into and out of Raqa had already been restricted since January 2014, when IS seized the city from rebels who had captured it from regime forces in March 2013. Since the jihadist group took over the provincial capital, only a handful of outsiders have been able to maintain contact with Raqa residents.

They include Britain-based monitor the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and activist group Raqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS). RBSS formed secretly in April 2014 to show the world what was happening inside the city, and has documented life there despite a terrifying backlash from IS, which has murdered its activists in Raqa and even in Turkey.

Through RBSS, AFP made contact with several people still inside Raqa, who spoke under pseudonyms and described an atmosphere of growing paranoia among the city's jihadist rulers. Musa, 31, said IS was carefully controlling access to news on the US-backed campaign to oust the jihadist group from Raqa.

"Because of the heavy restrictions imposed by Daesh on the internet and satellite dishes, it's very difficult to find out what's happening in the battle for Raqa," Musa said, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

"We rely on what we're told by people who do manage to follow the news online-but that is very difficult to do, and very dangerous."

### Close surveillance

It is risky to even discuss the battle, he said. IS only allows "rumors that they are advancing and inflicting losses on the other side, who will fail to enter Raqa, as they put it," said Musa.

Any discussion of IS losses could result in arrest and even execution by the jihadists, he said. IS has long restricted access to the internet in territory under its control, banning private routers and allowing only a handful of internet cafes to function under close surveillance.

Residents say even permitted cafes are frequently raided to prevent customers accessing banned content. Since the SDF assault began, IS has closed several internet cafes in the city and erected new checkpoints, 22-year-old activist Ahmed said. "I go online now and then and surf on certain pages-but very, very carefully because of the restrictions Daesh puts on internet cafes," he said. Meanwhile, IS produces a steady stream of victorious propaganda, saying "they are killing and blowing up the Kurds".

IS has imposed an extreme interpretation of Islam

on Raqa, executing those who break the group's rules. The jihadists' de facto Syrian capital has been the scene of some of the group's most horrifying acts of violence, as well as a hub for foreign fighters it has attracted from around the world.

### Trying to escape

Residents have long been prevented from leaving Raqa without IS permission, but in recent months it has become impossible, said Abu Mohamed, another activist with RBSS who spoke from outside the city. Abu Mohamed said many residents want to flee. "But if their plans are discovered, they are arrested and their money is confiscated, and the smugglers trying to help them will be executed," he said.

He described two families who recently tried to escape with their children, terrified of intensifying US-led coalition air strikes and the jihadists' growing paranoia, but were captured shortly after leaving. The men were imprisoned and the families' money and identity documents were confiscated, he said. Analysts say the fight for Raqa is likely to be long and complicated.

The SDF says it will involve two phases: the first to besiege the city, and the second to enter and recapture it. But tensions over which forces will lead the final battle and the risk of civilian casualties are likely to hinder progress. Musa said he was waiting impatiently to be rid of IS's "occupation." "Liberation is the dream of all the free people of Raqa," he said. —AFP



# STUDENTS IN WASHINGTON, NY DITCH CLASS TO PROTEST TRUMP

FIGHTING TO THE END

**WASHINGTON:** Hundreds of students in Washington ditched school Tuesday to protest against US President-elect Donald Trump, marching through the heart of the US capital before descending on the White House.

They joined youth across the country who have staged similar walkouts since Trump's shock victory on November 8, carrying signs with messages like "spread love," "my black is beautiful" and "make America gay again." The young protesters marched across the Mall, the grassy esplanade that runs from the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial.

Anna, a 17-year-old immigrant from El Salvador, said she was "uncertain about my future." "I'm worried that when this man gets into office we won't be safe on the streets anymore." Trump has pledged to end Barack Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy protecting youth like Anna who arrived in the country illegally as children. But the president-elect has not indicated whether ending the program would result in the deportation of those already enrolled.

"Even if we don't make a difference, we'll know that we fought to the end," she said.

Wearing a shirt with the phrase "Nasty Woman" - a nod to Trump's "such a nasty woman" dig aimed at Clinton during the final presidential debate - Nell called Trump "an extremely dangerous man in an extremely powerful position." "There's so much anger and frustration because it's not fair - almost everyone here who's protesting can't vote," the 13-year-old said.



**CHICAGO:** Students at the University of Chicago participate in a walk-out and rally to protest President-elect Donald Trump on Tuesday. —AFP

"This is their way of showing that there needs to be a change and that things aren't right."

**'Get out of my swamp'**

Eva, 16, said the protests gave hope for the future. "You're looking at it," she said, motioning to the hundreds of rallying students as they marched toward the White House, Trump's future residence. She hoisted a poster that said "Get out of my swamp" - a reference to Trump's vow to drain Washington of corruption.

She said candidates in the next election need "to do a better job of actually talking to people who are disaffected, who are upset." "There needs to be more work in small towns." Hundreds of high school students also demonstrated in New York Tuesday morning outside Trump Tower, protesting in the pouring rain as the president-elect huddled inside with Vice president-elect Mike Pence to nail down cabinet appointments. "No Ku Klux Klan, no fascists, no racists" the students

shouted in turn, alternating their cries with: "Say it loud, say it clear, refugees are welcome here."

Some in the crowd shouted "My body my choice," giving voice to concerns about reverses on women's rights to abortion under Trump, who has vowed to put pro-life justices on the nation's high court. Trump Tower - where dozens of police stood guard - has been the focus of protests every day since the New York billionaire's election. —AFP



**BOBIGNY, France:** Former French Economy Minister Emmanuel Macron delivers a speech during a press conference to announce his candidacy for next year's presidential election yesterday. —AFP

## MAVERICK MACRON ENTERS FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL RACE

**PARIS:** Political outsider Emmanuel Macron joined the increasingly unpredictable race for France's presidency yesterday, vowing to take on "the same men and the same ideas" that dominate national politics.

Macron, a 38-year-old former economy minister, announced as widely expected that he will stand as an independent in next year's vote, backed by his centrist movement "En Marche" ("On the Move"). Never elected and "neither of the left or the right" in his own words, the pro-business and tech-savvy former investment banker is hoping to shake up a race dominated by older, more familiar faces. "We have entered a new era," Macron declared yesterday, referring to a crisis for Western democracies as well as the dangers of global warming and growing inequality. "We can't respond with the same men and the same ideas," he added at a news conference held symbolically at a jobs training centre in a gritty Parisian suburb.

The centre-right Republicans party is tipped to win the two-stage election in April and May. But some analysts are questioning such assumptions after Donald Trump's stunning upset in the United States.

Macron's entry adds another element of uncertainty, with the Republicans and ruling Socialist parties yet to nominate their candidates less than six months before the voting. The resurgent far-right National Front under leader Marine Le Pen, who announced her slogan "In the name of the people" yesterday, is seeking new momentum after Trump's win.

Dismissing Macron as "a candidate of the banks", she said yesterday that "there is undeniably a new world emerging and there is an old order that is collapsing in on itself." Her new campaign headquarters are close to the presidential palace on one of Paris' most expensive streets, leading her to joke about having to travel "only 1.7 kilometers" to claim power.

**Empty political system**

Macron, who quit the beleaguered Socialist government in August to focus on his own political movement, is expected to steal centrist voters from the Republicans as well as the left. A poll Tuesday showed him as one of France's most "presidential" figures behind the election favourite Alain Juppe, a

71-year-old former prime minister with one of the longest CVs in French politics.

Juppe is favored over ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy and former prime minister Francois Fillon for the Republicans' nomination, but polls are tightening ahead of primary voting this Sunday and next. Macron has a mere two years' experience in government, serving as a sometimes rebellious economy minister from 2014-2016 and as an economic advisor to his one-time mentor, President Francois Hollande. "I believe that the French people won't put their destiny in the hands of someone with no experience," Fillon said yesterday.

But Macron believes youth and inexperience are assets in a country weary of a political class blamed for years of low growth, high unemployment and mounting government debt. "Our political system is blocked," said the high-flying graduate of elite universities who wrote a thesis on Machiavelli, the famously scheming Italian political theorist.

Macron, who quit Hollande's government in August, threw new barbs at his ex-boss yesterday. "I've seen the emptiness of our political system from the inside," he said. Macron is left-wing on social issues, pledging to bring jobs to deprived areas and a defender of public services, but also pro-business, notably as a vocal critic of France's strict labour laws. A maverick in politics as well as in his private life, the accomplished pianist is married to his former school-teacher, a divorcee with three children who is some 20 years his senior.

**Unpopular president**

President Hollande, who has yet to announce whether he will run in next year's election, is reportedly furious at what he sees as betrayal by his one-time protegee. The president called Tuesday for "cohesion" and "uniting" in the divided Socialist party. Hollande is one of the most unpopular presidents since World War II after a five-year term marked by multiple terror attacks, stubbornly high unemployment and U-turns on key policies.

He was widely panned, even by his own prime minister, after agreeing to collaborate for a tell-all book published in October in which he criticised ministers, judges and the national football team. —AFP

## POLICE SEARCH FOR MOTIVE IN KILLING OF AIRPORT WORKER

**OKLAHOMA CITY:** Oklahoma City police are investigating why a man waited to gun down an airline employee outside Will Rogers World Airport in a deadly ambush that forced hundreds of travelers to take shelter and prompted authorities to shut down the state's busiest airport for hours.

Later Tuesday, police discovered the suspected shooter dead from an apparently self-inflicted gunshot wound inside a pickup truck in a parking garage near where they believe he waited, watching airport employees come and go before shooting and killing Michael Winchester, 52, a Southwest Airlines employee. "We do believe this was a premeditated act against the victim," said Oklahoma City Police Capt. Paco Balderrama. "This was not random, and obviously the investigation is ongoing."

**Resuming normal operations**

Normal operations resumed yesterday morning at the airport after 25 flights were canceled Tuesday because of the shooting. Balderrama said late Tuesday that investigators hadn't positively identified the shooter, but said the man apparently knew Winchester's schedule and routine and that the two men likely knew one another. "It's too early in the investigation to figure out the exact motive," Balderrama said. The 1 p.m. shooting set off a

scramble at the airport, with police immediately closing the sprawling complex and asking passengers inside to seek cover.

They diverted incoming flights and refused to give already-loaded aircraft permission to leave. There were concerns the gunman might have entered the terminal and mingled among passengers or employees. "We have a heightened level of security all the time. These people have access to aircraft so we're very concerned about that," airport spokeswoman Karen Carney said.

Winchester - whose address is listed as Washington, Oklahoma, about 35 miles south of the airport - was a former University of Oklahoma football player whose son James is a player for the Kansas City Chiefs. The NFL team tweeted Tuesday night: "Our love and support is with James and the entire Winchester family."

Southwest Airlines canceled flights out of the city for the remainder of the day even though the rest of the terminal reopened. Hundreds of people were stranded inside the terminal for more than three hours before officers began letting them leave slowly. Carney said about 300 people were held on aircraft away from the terminal after their planes landed ahead of a ground stop.

Police found the suspect's red pickup truck on the second floor of a public parking garage about

three hours after the shooting and used a robot to determine the suspect was dead, then gave an all-clear. The airport handles between 7,000 and 8,000 passengers daily for Alaska, Delta, Southwest and United airlines and has a separate terminal that serves as a transfer center for federal inmates. A jet carrying inmates to the transfer site was allowed to land while the rest of the airport was shuttered.

Video from a television station helicopter showed what appeared to be a pool of blood about 100 feet from the airport's employee parking area - and about 100 yards from the airport's ticket counters and departure area.

While airports have high security, Balderrama said he didn't know whether surveillance cameras might show the shooting. Balderrama initially said police had received reports of a possible second victim, but no one was found. Michael Winchester was a punter on the University of Oklahoma's 1985 national championship team.

"Our hearts are truly heavy for the entire Winchester Family. Mike was a former Sooner student athlete as was his son James/daughter Carolyn," the school's athletic director, Joe Castiglione, tweeted Tuesday afternoon. He added "daughter Becca was also a student athlete. Please keep this beautiful family in your prayers" in a later tweet. —AP

## OBAMA URGES 'COURSE CORRECTION' ON GLOBALIZATION

**ATHENS:** Globalization has brought many economic benefits to the world but needs a "course correction" to address growing inequality, US President Barack Obama said yesterday on his European farewell tour.

Obama spoke during a visit originally planned as a valedictory lap, but which has become focused on reassuring jittery allies after the shock election victory by Donald Trump, a staunch critic of free trade agreements. "The global path of globalization demands a course correction," Obama said in an eagerly-awaited speech in Athens, before continuing his journey to Berlin. "When we see people, global elites, wealthy corporations seemingly living by a different set of rules, avoiding taxes, manipulating loopholes... this feeds a profound sense of injustice," he added.

During the trip, the outgoing president has repeatedly referred to the anger that

lately brought success to populist movements in Europe and the United States, such as the Brexit referendum and Trump's shock victory last week.

In comments Tuesday Obama cautioned the world must guard against "a rise in a crude sort of nationalism or ethnic identity or tribalism that is built around an 'us' and a 'them'". European governments, especially eastern countries close to Russia's orbit, have been shaken after Trump appeared to call into question Washington's near 70-year security guarantee by saying he would only help NATO allies if they paid their way. Trump welcomed Britain's shock vote in June to leave the European Union (EU) and has been a critic of global free trade agreements.

However, Obama was at pains to stress that Europe-and NATO-would remain the

cornerstone of US foreign policy. The US-led NATO grouping is "absolutely vital" to US interests and a strong, unified Europe was good for America and the world, Obama said in comments aimed at reassuring old partners. "We know what happens when Europeans start dividing themselves up... the 20th century was a bloodbath," he said pointedly on Tuesday.

Following his speech, the president will head to Germany to visit Chancellor Angela Merkel, whom he has described as "probably... my closest international partner these last eight years." During his time in Berlin, he will also huddle with the leaders of Britain, France and Italy, as Europe desperately seeks clues to future US policy in a Trump world. While Obama has generally been welcomed in Greece, there were some who came out onto the streets in protest. —AFP



**ATHENS:** People stand next to a banner reading 'Nations don't need protectors-they smash governments, EU-IMF. Obama unwanted' hung at the Athens polytechnic school yesterday on the eve of the 43rd anniversary of the student's uprising against the US-backed military junta. —AFP

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## SOUTH AFRICANS PROTEST AGAINST RACISM IN COFFIN ASSAULT CASE



MIDDELBURG, SOUTH AFRICA: An Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), supporter holds a placard outside the high court yesterday. —AP

**MIDDELBURG, SOUTH AFRICA:** Two white South Africans accused of forcing a black man into a coffin and threatening to set him on fire appeared before a judge yesterday as demonstrators protested against racism outside the courthouse.

Members of the ruling African National Congress party and opposition parties gathered outside the court in Middelburg in Mpumalanga province, where the judge postponed the case against the two detained farmers until Jan. 25. The two men said they did not apply for bail because they would fear for their lives if released, the African News Agency reported.

A video showing the racially charged incident has circulated on social media, intensifying debate about South Africa's legacy of white minority rule, which ended in 1994.

The video shows a man cowering and moaning in a coffin as a tormentor pushes part of the lid over his head and upper body. A man is also heard threatening to pour gasoline in the coffin. Another threat is to put a snake in the coffin.

The assaulted man, Victor Rethabile Mlotshwa, said the two men accused him of trespassing on their farm after he used a footpath in the area. "The next thing, there was a grave and then a coffin. There was nothing I could do because the other man had a gun," Mlotshwa said, according to the News24 media organization.

Protesters at the courthouse included members of the Economic Freedom Fighters, an opposition party that wants land held by the white minority to be redistributed to poor blacks. "They still benefit out of a crime, a crime against humanity," Mbuyiseni

Ndlozi, a spokesman for the opposition group, said of the white minority. He said it was wrong to forgive whites after apartheid but "still keep them in a position of dominance."

South Africa won praise for reconciliation efforts among racial groups when apartheid ended, but many black South Africans express frustration that they have failed to reap the economic benefits they expected from democracy. The income of the average white household is six times that of a black household, according to 2011 census data.

The foundation of F.W. de Klerk, South Africa's last apartheid-era president, said the assault on Mlotshwa was dehumanizing and humiliating. "We hope the justice system will reach an outcome that restores a measure of dignity to Mr. Mlotshwa," the foundation said. —AP

## BALKAN WEAPONS TRAFFICKED WEST STILL A 'MAJOR PROBLEM'

### MICRO-TRAFFICKING AT ITS BEST

**BELGRADE:** A year after jihadists used weapons manufactured in Serbia to gun down victims in Paris, Balkan countries are struggling to end the scourge of illegal arms trafficking. The killers who opened fire at the Bataclan theatre, cafes and restaurants in the French capital last November used Yugoslav-era assault rifles produced by Serbia's Zastava Arms.

Months earlier the Kouachi brothers, behind the deadly assault on the Charlie Hebdo magazine offices, carried a rocket launcher from the Balkans, a region littered with weapons since the wars of the 1990s. According to a top French magistrate, Robert Gelli, Serbian citizens come up in nearly a third of international arms trafficking probes carried out in France. "The weapons getting through to western Europe and the effects they have is still a major problem," said Ivan Zverzhanovski, who leads a UN Development Program project in the Balkans to help combat illegal

arms trafficking. The international monitoring project Small Arms Survey said in late 2014 that an estimated 3.6 million to 6.2 million firearms were in the hands of civilians in the Western Balkans, a region home to less than 25 million people.

In Serbia alone there are between 200,000 and 900,000 unregistered weapons, according to authorities, despite various amnesty campaigns launched since the assassination of reformist prime minister Zoran Djindjic in 2003. Yesterday, the interior ministry announced its biggest weapons haul in at least 16 years, which led to the arrests of 10 people. Police in Serbia's northwest seized arms including 111 hand grenades, 12 anti-tank grenades, two rocket launchers, 10 rifle grenades, 10 automatic or semi-automatic rifles, six pistols, 6,000 bullets and dozens of kilos of explosives.

In neighboring Bosnia, "it is a fact that... there are weapons that are not under control and traffick-

ers buy these weapons," Security Minister Dragan Mektic told news portal Klix.ba recently, stressing that the problem existed across the region.

#### Micro-trafficking

Zverzhanovski told AFP that, based on information from law enforcement agencies, a gun bought for 250 to 500 Euros on the Balkan black market could sell for 3,000 to 5,000 Euros in a country such as Sweden.

The weapons are rarely transported by the truck-load but a few at a time, in private cars or the countless buses that link the Balkans with western Europe. Some are sent in pieces to be reassembled later and some are even sent by post, experts say. Smuggling on this micro-scale makes the problem difficult to tackle. "Until now, no serious groups of arms traffickers have been dismantled in Bosnia," said Jasmin Ahic, an analyst from

Sarajevo's faculty of criminology.

The arms have their roots in communist Yugoslavia, where large stockpiles were kept across the federation for use by civilian-staffed "territorial defense" units, designed to defend against a surprise foreign attack.

They ended up deployed in inter-ethnic civil war as the federation collapsed, while more weapons were smuggled into the region to build up armies in the face of international sanctions.

#### 'Turning point'

Such arms went untracked in the chaos of conflict until resurfacing again on the streets of Aachen, Stockholm or Paris, where 130 people were killed in the attacks on November 13, 2015. "The Paris attacks were a turning point on many levels," said Zverzhanovski, referring to growing cooperation within the EU and between Balkan law enforcement agencies.

Serbian and French officials signed an accord in October to form joint teams to investigate arms smuggling, and Belgrade's prosecutor for organized crime Miladen Nenadic said "determination and clarity" were needed to tackle the problem.

In April, 5,000 police officers were mobilized in all former Yugoslav republics in a 48-hour Interpol-led operation-but it resulted in the seizure of just 40 firearms and six kilos of explosives, along with 22 arrests, according to Bosnian police.

According to Zverzhanovski, efforts are "still relatively ad hoc, case-based," and the EU needs to help to build the capacity of Balkan police forces, along with plying political pressure on the region to deal with illegal possession. "This is the moment to tackle it, before these countries come into the EU," he said, noting that Croatia's efforts on firearms dropped off significantly once it joined the bloc. —AFP



APATIN, SERBIA: This handout photo provided by Serbian Ministry of Interior affairs shows weapons, explosives and ammunition seized during a police action near the north-western Serbian town of Apatin on November 15, 2016. —AFP

## PUTIN WITHDRAWS RUSSIA FROM INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

**MOSCOW:** Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree yesterday to withdraw Russia from the International Criminal Court, which rules on such grave charges as genocide and crimes against humanity.

Russia in 2000 signed the Rome treaty that established the Hague-based court but never ratified it. Putin's decree, published on the Kremlin's website, comes a day after the UN General Assembly's human rights committee approved a resolution condemning Russia's "temporary occupation of Crimea" and blamed Russia for rights abuses such as discrimination against some Crimean residents, such as Tatars.

Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014 from Ukraine following a hastily called referendum, a move that led to crippling Western sanctions. A separatist insurgency erupted in eastern Ukraine the following month, backed by Russia.

The ICC on Monday issued a preliminary report where it described what happened in



SOCHI, RUSSIA: Russian President Vladimir Putin heads a meeting on military industry issues in the Black Sea resort on Tuesday. —AP

Crimea as "an international armed conflict between Ukraine and the Russian Federation." His spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, explained the withdrawal by "national interests" and argued

that since Russia never ratified it Wednesday's decree was just a formality. Peskov also dismissed the ICC's accusations of an "armed conflict" in Crimea, arguing that Crimea joined Russia after a legitimate popular vote.

Russia's foreign ministry insisted in a statement that Russia wants everyone implicated in grave international crimes to face justice but expressed frustration over the court's work in recent years. "The court has unfortunately failed to match the hopes one had and did not become a truly independent and respected body of international justice," the ministry said, adding that in the ICC's 14 years of work "only four verdicts" have been passed while \$1 billion was spent on expenses.

Just hours before Russia's announcement, the UN human rights chief made a spirited defense of the ICC, entreating countries not to leave it. Several African nations have recently announced plans to leave the treaty. Jamey Keaten in Geneva contributed to this report. —AP



DADAAB, KENYA: This file photo taken on April 29, 2015 shows a Somali refugee woman with her child standing in their compound at Hagadera sector of the Dadaab refugee camp, north of the Kenyan capital Nairobi. —AFP

## KENYA DELAYS CLOSURE OF DADAAB REFUGEE CAMP BY SIX MONTHS

**NAIROBI:** Kenya said yesterday it will delay by six months the closure of the Dadaab refugee camp, the world's largest, after calls by the UN and aid groups to postpone it on humanitarian grounds.

Interior minister Joseph Nkaissery said the move follows a request from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to delay the dismantling of the camp, originally planned for this month. It has now been pushed back to May. "I wish to announce that the government has accepted the request to extend the deadline for the completion of the repatriation of Somali refugees and the eventual closure of Dadaab refugee complex by six months," he told a news conference.

Nkaissery said a comprehensive repatriation programme would be rolled out next month at the camp, which is home to hundreds of thousands of mostly Somali refugees. "The repatriation will continue to be carried out in a humane, safe and dignified manner," he said. The government announced in May that the vast Dadaab camp in north-east Kenya would be shut down, citing security concerns. Since sending troops into neighbouring Somalia in 2011, Kenya has come under repeated attack from Shabaab, East Africa's long-time branch of Al-Qaeda.

#### 'Forcible returns are illegal'

Nairobi has taken a hardline position, claiming Dadaab acts as a terrorist training ground for Shabaab Islamists, and has

publicly and repeatedly said it would remove all Somali refugees from the country by the end of the year. "Delaying the closure of the camp by six months is certainly better than deporting the refugees in two weeks. But with the new date... the refugees will continue to feel that they must leave," said Gerry Simpson, a researcher at rights group Human Rights Watch (HRW).

"Forcible returns are illegal. Kenya must end its threats to close Dadaab and the UNHCR and donors must press Kenya to publicly reassure the Somali refugees and tell them that they are welcome in Kenya until they are able to return home safely."

In September HRW warned in a report that the repatriation of Somalis from the sprawling Dadaab camp violated international standards and that refugees were returning home involuntarily only to face persecution and hunger. The Kenyan government dismissed the report. Refugees will be returning to a country that already has over one million people displaced from their homes, where five million lack enough food and where African and Somali forces are still fighting Al-Qaeda-aligned Shabaab militants.

An estimated 18,000 have returned this year — 10,000 since the announcement of the camp's closure. The vast majority of residents of the Dadaab complex of camps close to the Kenya-Somalia border fled Somalia's more than two-decade-long conflict. Many remain fearful of returning to a country where insecurity remains rife. —AFP

## CAN SENEGAL STOP CHILD BEGGING, TRAFFICKING BY ISLAMIC TEACHERS?

**DAKAR:** Dressed in ill-fitting football kits and covered in dust and dirt, dozens of young boys chatter, laugh and chase a ball as Maimouna Balde leafs through a list of names. When a scuffle breaks out between two boys, Balde instantly steps between the former child beggars in the yard of the shelter for abandoned children in Senegal's capital, Dakar. "It is tough here - many of the boys have been beaten by their teachers and forced to live on the streets," the head of the Ginddi centre told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, reading a file listing boys as young as five and notes on various abuses.

Many of these children, known as talibe, are sent by parents in Senegal or trafficked from neighbouring countries such as Guinea-Bissau to Islamic schools, called daaras, where they are expected to receive food, shelter and teachings from the Koran.

But tens of thousands of children in daaras across the West African nation are forced to beg in the streets to make money for their teachers, called marabouts, said rights groups such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Anti-Slavery International (ASI). These influential Islamic figures, respected and even feared by communities and politicians, punish their pupils if they fail to bring in some 2,000 CFA francs (\$3) per day, activists said.

Alongside a drive to take the talibe off the streets, the state is considering a law to regulate daaras - seeking to raise teaching standards and eliminate trafficking and forced begging. Yet activists are concerned that the

clout of marabouts may hold back efforts to protect children in the Koranic schools as Senegal wrestles with its identity amid a rising tide of Islamist militancy in the region.

Many people in the Muslim-majority but staunchly secular West African nation are asserting their cultural and religious identity over Western values in response to growing anti-Islam sentiment in Europe and elsewhere, said Sarah Mathewson of ASI. "This extends to marabouts feeling excluded from Senegal's education system, which operates in French," she said. "They must be integrated and supported if things are to improve."

#### Marabout Mafia

Many of the talibe arriving at the Ginddi centre are sick and traumatised, according to staff at the state-run shelter, which works to reunite children with their families. President Macky Sall in June ordered the removal of children from the streets and said those who force them to beg would be imprisoned in a drive to end a practice estimated by the United Nations to generate \$8 million a year for Koranic teachers in the capital.

Yet fewer than 1,000 talibe of more than 30,000 in Dakar have been swept off the streets to date, with marabouts hiding them away or dressing them smartly to evade detection, said the state's national director of child protection Niokhobaye Diouf. "Many disappeared after Sall's announcement... hidden by the crooked people who profit from their begging," Diouf said. —Reuters

## UKRAINE CALLS FOR VISA-FREE TRAVEL AS EU DRAGS ITS FEET

**KIEV/BRUSSELS:** The Ukrainian parliament called on the European Union yesterday to grant the former Soviet republic visa-free travel, a day before the bloc is due to debate the matter, with sources pointing to hesitation on the side of Germany and France.

Ukraine has been the heart of a dispute between the West and Russia since Moscow annexed the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea in the spring of 2014 and went

on to back rebels in a war against government troops in the east of the country. The EU and United States have since imposed sanctions on Moscow and sought to build closer ties with Kiev, though they have also grown annoyed with Ukraine's slow progress on reforms and fighting corruption. Torn by growing eurosceptic and anti-migrant sentiment, the bloc has also gone cool on delivering a key reward to Kiev: dropping visa requirements for visit-

ing Ukrainian citizens. "They have invited us to the large European building but tell us to wipe our feet. We wiped them once, we wiped them the second time, changed the shoes, put on slippers but are still standing in front of a closed door," said Leonid Yemets, a Ukrainian lawmaker with the People's Front group. "Now it's up to you dear EU staff and bureaucrats. If you are not able to deliver on your commitments then, excuse me, but neither you

nor we... need such a Europe." Germany and France led the drive to hold off any new visa waivers before the EU beefs up an emergency mechanism to suspend free-travel agreements if needed. The bloc is wary of any repeat of a 2015 influx of some 1.3 million refugees and migrants, and leaders fear appearing soft on immigration following Britain's vote to leave the EU and the U.S. election of Donald Trump as president. —Reuters



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## FORMER UN CHIEF KOFI ANNAN 'DEEPLY CONCERNED' OVER MYANMAR VIOLENCE

**YANGON:** Former UN chief Kofi Annan has expressed "deep concern" over violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state where the military killed dozens of people over the weekend, sending hundreds of Rohingya fleeing to Bangladesh.

The military has locked down a strip of land along the border, an area largely home to the oppressed Muslim minority, since deadly raids on police posts last month. The army says troops have killed nearly 70 people as they hunt the attackers, who they say are radicalised Rohingya militants with links to overseas Islamists.

Activists say the toll could be much higher, accusing troops of shooting unarmed civilians, raping women and torching homes, but the army has stopped independent observers from investigating the claims.

Annan called for an end to the bloodshed in a statement released as seven members of a commission he heads on Rakhine held talks with local officials in state capital Sittwe. "I wish to express my deep concern over the recent violence in northern Rakhine State, which is plunging the state into renewed instability and creating new displacement," he said in a statement late Tuesday. "All communities must renounce violence and I urge the security services to act in full compliance with the rule of law."

Yesterday the commission members will head to



**SITTWE MYANMAR:** Members of the multi-sector advisory commission on Myanmar's Rakhine State, Win Mra (C) and Khin Maung Lay (R) are escorted by an armed policeman during a visit to a Rohingya camp yesterday. — AFP

villages hit by the unrest. The US is also "concerned by reports of a spike in violence" in Rakhine, US State Department spokeswoman Elizabeth

Trudeau said in Washington, urging the government to allow a "credible and independent investigation".

Days of apparent calm were shattered over the weekend when troops killed more than 30 people in two days of fighting that saw the military bring in helicopter gunships for the first time. The surge in fighting sent around 200 Rohingya fleeing to the Bangladesh border, according to community leaders, who said they have been left stranded after border guards pushed them back.

### 150,000 without aid

One commander said the group, which arrived on Monday, was the largest number of Rohingya pushed back since violence erupted in Rakhine in early October. Some 15,000 people have been displaced by the unrest and 150,000 from the deeply impoverished area have been without humanitarian aid for more than a month, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The resurgence of violence in Rakhine has deepened a crisis that has already threatened to derail the new administration led by democracy activist Aung San Suu Kyi. The democracy champion appointed fellow Nobel laureate Annan to oversee a commission charged with finding ways to heal wounds in the poor western state.

Rakhine has sizzled with religious tension ever since waves of violence between the majority Buddhist population and the Muslim Rohingya left more than 100 dead in 2012. — AFP

## PAKISTAN'S TOP DIPLOMAT SAYS HE WILL VISIT INDIA

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan's top foreign affairs official has said he plans to visit India next month for a regional conference, the first high-profile visit since tensions spiraled between the arch-rivals after a deadly attack on an Indian army base.

Sartaj Aziz, adviser to Pakistan's prime minister Nawaz Sharif and de facto foreign minister, said he will attend the Heart of Asia conference on Afghanistan, to be hosted by India in December, "to defuse the tension". "We want to prove that Pakistan is with the multilateral process by attending the Heart of Asia Conference as Afghanistan is our top priority," he told reporters in Islamabad on Tuesday.

It was not immediately clear if he would hold any bilateral talks with Indian officials during the visit. The decision came after months of surging tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbors sparked by a September attack on an Indian base in disputed Kashmir, which killed 19 soldiers and which New Delhi blames on Pakistan-based militants.

Tensions reached dangerous levels as India said it had retaliated to the raid by carrying out "surgical strikes" across the heavily militarized border, sparking a furious reaction from Islamabad, which denied the strikes took place. There have since been repeated outbreaks of cross-border firing, with both sides reporting deaths and injuries including of civilians.

India also sought to isolate Pakistan in the wake of the militant raid, pulling out of a key South Asian summit set to be held in Islamabad in November in a major snub. Other countries scheduled to attend the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit followed suit, eventually forcing Islamabad to cancel it entirely.

In his comments Tuesday, televised by Pakistan's biggest private TV channel GEO, Aziz condemned India for that decision. Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since the end of British colonial rule in 1947. Both claim the Himalayan territory in full and have fought two wars over the mountainous region. — AFP



**HYDERABAD:** Pakistani army soldiers show a student to operate an assault rifle during their visit to a garrison yesterday. Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the country's powerful army chief left yesterday for a strategically located secret area bordering India to witness a military exercise of ground and air power amid increasing tension with India over Kashmir. — AP

## PAKISTAN PM, ARMY CHIEF WATCH MILITARY DRILL AT INDIA BORDER DISPLAYING PAKISTAN'S MILITARY MIGHT

**KHAIRPUR TAMIWALI, PAKISTAN:** Pakistan's prime minister and powerful army chief traveled yesterday to a strategic area along the border with India to observe a drill meant to display the country's military might amid escalating tensions with New Delhi over the disputed Kashmir region.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Army Chief Gen. Raheel Sharif watched the exercise - dubbed "Strike of Thunder" and complete with planes, tanks, artillery and other heavy weapons - to test the army's preparedness.

The drill, in the Khairpur Tamiwali desert area near the district of Bahawalpur, came three days after Indian fire in Kashmir killed seven Pakistani soldiers in a new escalation between the two nuclear-armed rivals.

### Trading fire

The two sides have traded fire repeatedly in recent weeks across the Line of Control, which divides the Himalayan region into India- and Pakistani-controlled zones. Both Pakistan and India claim Kashmir in its entirety.

Pakistan's army chief has less than two weeks before retirement after his three-year term. The government has not yet named his successor. In a speech at the drill, Pakistan's prime minister paid a glowing tribute to the armed forces and reiterated his government's commitment to fighting terrorism.

Nawaz Sharif also issued a veiled warning to India, saying that Pakistan would deliver a "befitting response" to any hostile enemy action. The latest escalation was set off by a deadly

September attack on an Indian military base in the Indian-controlled part of Kashmir. India has blamed Pakistan-based militants for that attack and others, a charge Pakistan denies.

Tensions have run high since Indian troops killed a Kashmiri militant leader in July. The killing ignited some of the most violent protests in years, and dozens of people have been killed in India's resulting crackdown. Despite pleas from the United Nations, the two sides have continued to exchange fire in Kashmir. The violence has forced thousands of villagers on the Pakistani side to flee for safety. India says it has been retaliating for Pakistani violations of a 2003 cease-fire. Two of the three wars between India and Pakistan since 1947 have been fought over their competing claims to Kashmir. — A

## AFGHAN OFFICIALS: SUICIDE BOMBER KILLS 6 IN KABUL

**KABUL:** A suicide bomber on a motorbike killed six people in Kabul yesterday in an attack targeting a minibus with security agents working for the government. The Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan promptly claimed responsibility for the bombing.

Sediq Sediqqi, an Interior Ministry spokesman, said four civilians and two members of the agency were killed. The attack also left 13 people wounded, including five members of the security force.

The blast destroyed the minibus and another car, which were quickly towed away as security forces sealed off the site of the suicide attack on a wide Kabul boulevard. An Afghan security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media, said the bomber intentionally targeted the minibus with the members of the agency that provides protection for

high-ranking government officials - similar to the US Secret Service.

The attack was the second this year against the agency. In April, a coordinated Taliban assault using a suicide truck bomb and gunmen killed 64 people at the agency's main compound in Kabul. The Afghan IS affiliate claimed responsibility for yesterday's attack in a posting on a website used by the militants, saying an IS bomber attacked intelligence service employees.

In other violence, a man was killed late Tuesday night when a sticky bomb attached to his car detonated in Kabul, the city's police said. The police said the vehicle belonged to a government ministry office in charge of rural development.

The Islamic State group emerged for the first time last year in Afghanistan as an offshoot of the militant group fighting in Iraq and Syria. Analysts believe the IS affiliate in the country is mostly made up of disenfranchised Taliban fighters. — AP



**KABUL:** Afghan security forces remove a destroyed vehicle after a suicide attack yesterday. — AP

## GERMAN CABINET BACKS CONTINUED MILITARY MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

**BERLIN:** Chancellor Angela Merkel's cabinet yesterday approved the continuation of Germany's deployment of up to 980 soldiers to Afghanistan through the end of 2017, a government spokesman said. The decision, which must still be approved by parliament, came less than a week after armed Taliban militants stormed the German consulate in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif and killed at least four Afghans and wounded more than 100 people. "With up to 980 soldiers, the German army will in future advise, support and train Afghan security services," said the gov-

ernment in a statement.

Germany, which heads the NATO-led Resolute Support mission in northern Afghanistan, has its soldiers stationed on the outskirts of Mazar-i-Sharif, and another 150 soldiers in Kabul.

The NATO mission includes a total of 13,000 foreign troops from Germany, Italy, the United States and others. The NATO forces are focused on training the Afghan army and police, not combat operations. Germany is also slated to provide up to 1.7 billion Euros in civilian aid to Afghanistan through 2020. — Reuters

## PAKISTAN ORDERS 400 TURKS TO LEAVE AHEAD OF ERDOGAN'S VISIT

**ISLAMABAD:** Ahead of a visit by Turkey's president, Islamabad ordered 400 Turkish nationals affiliated with a chain of international schools in Pakistan to leave the country within 72 hours, officials said yesterday.

The move was announced on the website of the Pak-Turk International chain of schools and colleges, and confirmed by two school officials. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity, saying they feared for their safety when they return to Turkey.

Turkish officials have accused the school of being affiliated with the movement of US-based dissident cleric Fethullah Gulen. Erdogan arrived in Islamabad later yesterday for a two-day visit and was received by Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his family.

The Turkish leader has accused Gulen supporters of staging a failed July 15 coup attempt. His government later seized hundreds of social, educational and health care facilities and sacked thousands of employees on suspicion of working for Gulen. The Pak-Turk International operates 28 campuses throughout Pakistan. Of those being asked to leave, 108 are staff members and the rest are family members.

Erdogan welcomed Pakistan's decision at the Ankara airport before leaving for the trip, praising Islamabad for showing solidarity with Turkey against Gulen's movement - which Turkey has designated a terror organization. "They moved rapidly in the direction of ending the (Gulen movement's) presence in Pakistan and toward thwarting their attempts at unrest," Erdogan said.

"As you know, Pakistan has asked persons linked to the organization to leave the country by Nov. 20. This is very pleasing for us."

One of the Pak-Turk school officials denied that the institution was in any way related to Gulen. He said school was registered locally and fulfilled all local legal requirements. The other official said the school will challenge the decision because it wasn't possible for so many people to leave on such short notice. Both officials said the expulsions will not hinder the day-to-day func-

tioning of the school, since the vast majority of the 1,500 staff members are Pakistani.

Erdogan said Turkey's educational authorities would help Pakistan overcome any problems the expulsion may cause. "We will do whatever we can to ensure that there is no void or suffering as a result of the ouster of this organization from the country," he said. A Pakistani Interior Ministry spokesman did not immediately respond to requests for comment from The Associated Press. — AP



**ANKARA:** Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, second from right, inspects a military honor guard at Esenboga Airport before boarding his plane for a two-day official visit to Pakistan yesterday. — AP





A car bomb explodes next to Iraqi special forces' armored vehicles as they advance towards Islamic State held territory in Mosul yesterday. — AP

## IMF URGES FURTHER SUBSIDY REFORMS

Continued from Page 1

But the plan was fiercely opposed by the previous parliament and also by a majority of candidates running in polls slated for Nov 26. According to local media, the government plans to end subsidies by

2020. To meet budget financing needs, Kuwait has drawn down billions of dollars from its \$600-billion sovereign fund. It has also resorted to borrowing and plans to issue domestic and foreign bonds worth \$16.6 billion. Kuwait is projecting a deficit of \$29 billion this fiscal year. — AFP

## GOVT EYES TAXING REMITTANCES, PRIVATIZING...

Continued from Page 1

The petition was filed by lawyer Hani Hussein and former MP Abdulhameed Dashti, both of whom were disqualified by the election committee along with 45 other candidates. The ruling means that the committee, formed by the interior minister of judges, is legal and its decisions of barring and accepting election candidates are in line with the law.

Hussein however said that this ruling is not the "big surprise" verdict that could delay the Assembly elections. Hussein reiterated on his Twitter account that yesterday's ruling is not related with the other case that will be heard on Sunday, but he declined to reveal the nature of that case. The election committee's decisions to bar Hussein and Dashti have been upheld by the administrative and appeals courts and are widely expected to be supported by the court of cassation, whose rulings are final. Dashti's registration had been rejected by another court because he failed to submit his nomination papers in person because he has been outside the country for the past several months claiming he was undergoing medical treatment.

In another development, leading opposition figures contesting the election yesterday urged voters not to vote any member of the dissolved Assembly, because they completely surrendered to the government against the interests of the Kuwaiti people. "We hope that the reformist MPs will be the majority in the next Assembly... The Kuwaiti people will emerge victorious in the election," former Islamist opposition MP Bader Al-

Dahoum said at the election rally of Islamist candidate and former MP Jamaan Al-Harbash.

Speaking at the same rally, former opposition MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri said the country is facing a very dangerous period. "It is a choice between living in a state of masters and slaves or in the state of the rule of law," Muwaizri said. Harbash said Nov 26 is a day of rage against what the government and former Assembly members did against the opposition. "We are in a bottleneck. I tell them the response is coming and the Kuwaiti people will send you a clear message," he said.

"The former 'bogus' MPs will fail. We will change the face of the Assembly and will reclaim the Assembly chamber," Harbash vowed amid wild applause from the huge crowd. The former lawmaker did not rule out the possibility of the new Assembly getting dissolved, but he insisted this will not change the opposition's resolve. He said that since 2006, it has been one election after another.

"They want you to get frustrated from the election process, but we will not be," he said. "Today, we are fighting against the funds they are pumping (in the election). Do not vote for any member of the previous Assembly. We have accepted the challenge and on November 26, they will hear the response of the Kuwaiti people," Harbash insisted.

Both Harbash and Dahoum said they will vote for Muwaizri as the next speaker if they get elected. Muwaizri, in addition to former MPs Abdullah Al-Roumi and Ahmad Al-Mulaifi, have said they will contest the speaker's post against outgoing speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, triggering a key battle in the next Assembly.

## OXFORD DICTIONARIES NAME 'POST-TRUTH' WORD OF YEAR

LONDON: The Oxford Dictionaries chose "post-truth" as their word of the year yesterday, saying its use had spiked because of the Brexit vote in Britain and the rise of Donald Trump in the United States. "Post-truth has gone from being a peripheral term to being a mainstay in political commentary," the Oxford Dictionaries said in a statement, noting that usage had increased by 2,000 percent since last year. The publisher defined the word as "relating or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief".

"It's not surprising that our choice reflects a year dominated by highly-charged political and social discourse," said Casper Grathwohl, president of Oxford Dictionaries. "Fueled by the rise of social media as a news source and a growing distrust of facts offered up

by the establishment, 'post-truth' as a concept has been finding its linguistic footing for some time. "We first saw the frequency really spike this year in June with buzz over the Brexit vote and again in July when Donald Trump secured the Republican presidential nomination."

The runners-up for words of the year included the British term "Brexiteer" used for anti-EU advocates. "Alt-right" also made the shortlist, defined as an ultra-conservative grouping in the United States "characterized by a rejection of mainstream politics and the use of online media to disseminate deliberately controversial content". Trump's appointment of anti-establishment media firebrand Steve Bannon, seen as a leader of the "alt-right" movement, as his chief of staff earlier this week has proved highly controversial. — AP

## MAN CITY OWNER BUYS THE NATIONAL PAPER

ABU DHABI: The government of Abu Dhabi has sold its English-language daily, The National, to a media investment company owned by Sheikh Mansour, the owner of Manchester City Football Club. International Media Investments (IMI) acquired the daily, which was founded in 2008 by the government-owned Abu Dhabi Media (ADM), the newspaper said yesterday. IMI is a subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi Media Investment Corporation (ADMIC), a private company owned by Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, half-brother of Abu Dhabi's ruler and UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. Sheikh Mansour is also the owner of

the Abu Dhabi group that bought English Premier League club Manchester City in 2008.

"The 21st-century media landscape, dominated by digital platforms, especially mobile, offers new opportunities for The National to develop and extend its voice, while maintaining a robust presence as a traditional print asset," said a joint statement by IMI and ADM. ADM owns several publications, radios and television channels, including the widely circulated Alethiad newspaper and Abu Dhabi Channel. ADMIC partnered in 2010 with British Sky Broadcasting (BSkyB) to form Sky News Arabia, which launched in 2012. — AFP

Kuwait Times

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## BANNON ROLE SETS OFF CRITICAL FIRESTORM

White supremacists and neo-Nazis have rarely, if ever, in recent history been so enthusiastic about a presidential appointment as Donald Trump's choice of Steve Bannon to be his chief White House strategist. Before he took over as chief executive of Trump's campaign in August and led it to victory last week, Bannon headed Breitbart News, a website and voice for the alt-right movement, a loose right-wing confederation that includes hardcore nationalists, neo-Nazis, white supremacists and anti-Semites.

Five days after Trump defeated Democrat Hillary Clinton, Trump rewarded Bannon, 62, a former Goldman Sachs banker and a Navy veteran, by appointing him senior counselor and chief strategist - jobs not subject to US Senate confirmation. Democrats, rights activists and minority groups were outraged and said Trump, himself accused of racism and misogyny during the campaign, had just flung open the White House doors to hate-mongers. Many urged him to reconsider.

"Bringing Steve Bannon into the White House is an alarming signal that President-elect Trump remains committed to the hateful and divisive vision that defined his campaign," House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi said in a statement on Monday. "There must be no sugar-coating the reality that a white nationalist has been named chief strategist for the Trump administration," Pelosi said. The Southern Poverty Law Center, the Anti-Defamation League and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) also denounced Bannon.

### Nazi, KKK Support

Bannon, who grew up in a Democratic family, has a reputation of trying to tear down a Republican Party establishment that he deemed too soft and too entrenched. As a senior adviser to the Republican Trump, Bannon will be expected by far-right groups to champion their views and make sure that Trump, who takes office on Jan 20, keeps such campaign promises as building a wall on the southern US border, cracking down on Muslims entering the country and restricting the influx of Syrian war refugees.

"Perhaps 'The Donald' is for real," Rocky Suhayda, chairman of the American Nazi Party, told CNN. David Duke, a longtime leader of Ku Klux Klan movements, and Richard Spencer, a white nationalist who runs the National Policy Institute, were among the leading alt-right figures to praise Bannon's appointment. In remarks published in the New York Times on Tuesday, Bannon ascribed his interest in populism and American nationalism to a desire to curb what he views as the corrosive effects of globalization. He rejected what he called the "ethno-nationalist" tendencies of some in the movement. "It's not that some people on the margins, as in any movement, aren't bad guys - racists, anti-Semites. But that's irrelevant," he told the Times.

Political commentator Armstrong Williams, a close associate of former Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson, said Bannon was "one of the

finest and most honorable people I've ever met" and not bigoted in any way. The Trump campaign had been struggling to manage Trump's unconventional candidacy when Bannon took over. He stayed behind the scenes and devised the strategy for the final days of the campaign that kept Trump on message and enabled him to upset Clinton in crucial states such as Michigan.

It was Bannon and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law, who invited three women who accused Bill Clinton of sexual assault to attend a presidential debate in hopes of unnerving Hillary Clinton. Bannon, looking typically unkempt with mussed hair and stubble chin, grinned from the back of the room as Trump and the women held their pre-debate news conference. "Bannon is a legitimately sinister figure," Ben Shapiro, who had been editor-in-chief of Breitbart under Bannon, wrote in August on the dailywire.com conservative news website which he founded. "He is a vindictive, nasty figure... He will attempt to ruin anyone who impedes his unending ambition and he will use anyone bigger than he is - for example, Donald Trump - to get where he wants to go," Shapiro wrote.

### Anti-Semitism Accusations

While Bannon was at Breitbart, it had stories with headlines such as "Birth control makes women unattractive and crazy," "Political correctness protects Muslim rape culture" and "Hoist it high and proud: The Confederate flag proclaims a glorious heritage." The site's pro-Trump agenda featured speculative stories questioning Hillary Clinton's health and accusing her close aide Huma Abedin of being a Saudi spy.

Bannon was charged with domestic violence and battery in 1996 after his then-wife, Mary Louise Piccard, said he grabbed her by the throat and arm during an argument. The case was dropped when she did not appear in court. In 2007 Piccard said in court documents Bannon did not like the school the girls attended because it had too many "whiny brat" Jewish students.

Bannon had a varied and profitable career before joining Breitbart. He earned degrees from Virginia Tech, Georgetown University and Harvard Business School and served four years in the Navy. It was his Navy experience, he said, that led him to shed his family's Democratic allegiance and become an admirer of Republican Ronald Reagan.

He was at Goldman Sachs before starting his own investment firm, which specialized in media. Through negotiating a studio sale, he obtained a stake in the royalties for the popular television show "Seinfeld," a money-making powerhouse in syndication. He was an executive producer of the feature movies "Titus" and "The Indian Runner" before producing, directing or writing conservative-oriented documentaries such as "Clinton Cash" about the Clinton Foundation, "Generation Zero" about the global economic crisis of 2008-2009 and "The Undeclared" on former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin. —Reuters

## KUSHNER TO WIELD CLOUT

After winning a primary election that effectively clinched the Republican presidential nomination, Donald Trump paused to laud a boyish-looking 35-year-old who ultimately proved to be an indispensable figure on the path to the White House. "Honestly, Jared is a very successful real estate person. But I actually think he likes politics more than he likes real estate," Trump said of his son-in-law Jared Kushner, standing to his right during a victory speech after the Indiana party primary election in May. "But he's very good at politics."

Kushner, the slender, clean-cut New Jersey real estate scion who married Trump's daughter Ivanka in 2009, helped guide the Republican Trump to victory last week over Democrat Hillary Clinton and is poised to remain an influential adviser during his presidency. Kushner emerged as an important voice early in Trump's campaign, launched in June 2015. He was involved in almost every aspect of Trump's campaign, offering advice on key personnel decisions, strategy, speeches, fundraising and other areas.

Late in the campaign, he began laying the groundwork for a possible Trump-run television network, in the event his father-in-law lost, according to a person familiar with the matter. Kushner spearheads his family's real estate development company, Kushner Companies, and is the publisher of the New York Observer weekly newspaper, which he acquired at age 25. While a federal anti-nepotism law prohibits a president from hiring family members to serve in his administration, Kushner is set to remain a key insider and trusted confidant.

Reince Priebus, appointed Trump's White House chief of staff on Sunday, told NBC's "Today" show on Monday that Kushner "obviously" will be very involved in decision-making. Kushner serves on Trump's transition executive committee.

### Following Father's Footsteps

Kushner is a Harvard graduate with a New York University law degree and a master's in business administration. Like Trump, Kushner followed in the footsteps of a real estate powerhouse father. His father, Charles Kushner, is a real estate developer, philanthropist and major Democratic donor whose reputation was left in tatters after a lurid criminal case. He was sentenced to two years in prison after pleading guilty in 2004 to 18 counts of tax evasion, witness tampering and making unlawful campaign donations.

During the case, he admitted to smearing

his brother-in-law, who had cooperated with prosecutors, by hiring a prostitute to have sex with him in a motel room, then sending a secretly recorded video of the encounter to the man's wife, Charles Kushner's own sister. In an unusual twist, the man who prosecuted Charles Kushner was Chris Christie, now the governor of New Jersey, who also has served as an adviser to Trump. Kushner is an Orthodox Jew whose wife, Ivanka, converted to Judaism before they married. The family keeps kosher, observes the Sabbath and attends an upscale synagogue on New York's Upper East Side.

### Anti-Semitism Controversy

Steve Bannon, former head of the right-wing Breitbart News website, took a leadership post in the campaign in August after it became clear that Trump, his children and Kushner trusted his advice and analysis, a source said at the time. Breitbart News is closely associated with the "alt-right" movement, a loose online group of white supremacists, anti-Semites and others opposed to multiculturalism.

Trump, who takes office on Jan 20, named Bannon as chief strategist and senior counselor on Sunday. Dana Schwartz, a Jewish reporter for Kushner's newspaper, in July criticized Trump for his Twitter post accusing Clinton of corruption using a Star of David image and a background of \$100 bills. Schwartz then wrote an open letter to Kushner after being deluged with anti-Semitic tweets. Schwartz asked Kushner, "how do you allow this? Because, Mr Kushner, you are allowing this... When you stand silent and smiling in the background, his Jewish son-in-law, you're giving his most hateful supporters tacit approval."

Kushner responded by writing in the Observer, "In my opinion, accusations like 'racist' and 'anti-Semite' are being thrown around with a carelessness that risks rendering these words meaningless." He went on to write that his grandmother and grandfather survived the Nazi Holocaust while other relatives did not. "I know the difference between actual, dangerous intolerance versus these labels that get tossed around in an effort to score political points," Kushner wrote.

Kushner became a major player in real estate in his mid-20s, after his father's conviction. At 26, he orchestrated what was the most-expensive single-building purchase in US history in 2006 with the \$1.8 billion acquisition of a 41-storey skyscraper at 666 Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. Kushner told The Real Deal trade magazine afterward, "In New York, you have to act quickly, or else you get left in the dust." —Reuters

### Focus

## BIG DREAMS FOR PRO-TRUMP SITE BREITBART

The far-right news site Breitbart helped send Donald Trump to the White House with no-holds barred opinions and incendiary headlines that drew fire from mainstream media and pundits. Now, it seems, it wants to take that movement global. Growing out of its origins as a community of conservative bloggers, Breitbart News Network mirrored the tone of Trump's campaign with provocative and sometimes inaccurate claims, drawing criticism as racist, xenophobic and worse.

Breitbart, whose chairman Steve Bannon has been tapped for a key White House post after helping to mastermind Trump's campaign, outperformed many media outlets to get the fourth largest number of "engagements" by internet users on election night, according to the analytics group NewsWhip. Breitbart has signaled its intention to expand its global footprint, with sites expected in France and Germany after moving into Britain and supporting the Brexit movement.

The site, created by the late conservative commentator Andrew Breitbart, makes its impact with bare-knuckled headlines that mix opinion and sometimes stretched facts. Some examples of Breitbart stories are "Gay rights have made us dumber, it's time to get back in the closet," "There's no hiring bias against women in tech, they just suck at interviews," and "Science proves it: Fat-shaming works." Breitbart was among the outfits cited for the "worst journalism" of 2014 by the Columbia Journalism Review for erroneously reporting that the nominated attorney general Loretta Lynch had been a lawyer for Bill Clinton - and failing to correct the mistaken report that was based on another lawyer named Loretta Lynch.

### Welcome to France

Breitbart did not respond to an AFP interview request or query about its expansion plans. But a leader of France's far-right National Front said Tuesday that she welcomed reported plans by the group to expand and support the party's presidential campaign. "All alternative media are generally positive. Donald Trump is the demonstration of that... they're among the useful tools," said Marion Marechal-Le Pen, whose aunt Marine is the leader of the National Front. Placing Breitbart's chief in the White House could create some awkward situations and potential conflicts of interest, according to some analysts. Former Breitbart spokesman Kurt Bardella - who quit earlier this year - told The New York Times Bannon's role will mean Breitbart will be "as close as we are ever going to have - hopefully - to a state-run media enterprise."

Angelo Carusone of the left-leaning watchdog group Media Matters for America, also predicted Bannon's role will create a difficult diplomatic position for the Trump administration if Breitbart is "supporting foreign movements while his government is engaging with those governments." Ken Paulson, a former USA Today editor-in-chief who is dean of the college of media and entertainment at Middle Tennessee State University, said it's not clear what the rise of Breitbart and other partisan news outlets means for the mainstream media.

"The real question is whether there will continue to be a market for well researched and balanced coverage that doesn't pander to one side or the other," he said. Paulson drew a parallel between Breitbart and early newspapers that were designed "to share a political philosophy and undermine political rivals." The site "feels very 18th century to me," he said.

### 'Masquerading' as Media

Jeff Jarvis, a City University of New York journalism professor who blogs on media, also described Breitbart last month as one of several "political movements masquerading as media." For Carusone, Breitbart appears to be "challenging global power structures, and the way they do that is by preying on racial anxieties." While Breitbart offers a "veneer" of being a media organization, he said, "they have no noticeable editorial standards or journalistic practices, they do function like a political organism." Bardella this year quit the organization, protesting that under Bannon's leadership it became "the de facto propaganda machine for Donald Trump" and filled with "hateful rhetoric." "Steve ran the site and controlled the content as a dictator, not only limiting the expression of his journalists but also purposefully changing the narrative to increase vitriol, playing to the fears of his readers," Bardella wrote in a column in The Hill newspaper.

Breitbart has lashed out at critics who allege it has links to extremists, and has threatened to sue one media outlet. In a statement to The Hill, the group said it "is preparing a multimillion dollar lawsuit against a major media company for its baseless and defamatory claim that Breitbart News is a 'white nationalist website'."

On its site, Breitbart also hit back at claims Bannon is anti-Semitic. "The losers of the left have worked themselves into such a bizarre hysteria over the fact that they lost the White House that they have lost all connection to reality," said an article Monday by writer David Horowitz. "I can't think of anything stupider than the charge coming from all quarters of the left - including a headline in the pathetically wretched Huffington Post - that Bannon is an anti-Semite." —AFP

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## MERKEL NEW 'LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD'?

The shock election of Donald Trump as US president has forced greater responsibility for defending Western values and interests onto German Chancellor Angela Merkel's shoulders, analysts say, with some even crowning her the new "leader of the free world". While the last decade has been defined by Britain, France, Germany and the US showing a largely united front on issues ranging from NATO affairs to defense of basic freedoms, the coming four years may present a more fragmented picture.

During his campaign Trump signalled a protectionist and anti-immigration stance, while Britain is preoccupied with securing its future outside the European Union after June's stunning referendum vote to exit the bloc. France's President Francois Hollande is grappling with record low ratings ahead of next May's election that could see far-right Marine Le Pen reaching the second round run-off vote.

Merkel, after 11 years at the helm, now looks increasingly like the only bulwark of stability and liberal freedom among Western allies. "Merkel... has suddenly become the most important leader of the free, democratic and liberal world," said the left-leaning TAZ daily. The historian and columnist Timothy Garton Ash agreed in an editorial for Britain's Guardian newspaper: "I'm tempted to say that the leader of the free world is now Angela Merkel."

Rather than visit Britain - a natural stop for any US leader given the two countries' special relationship, US President Barack Obama was travelling yesterday to Berlin on his last official trip to Europe, in what almost seems like the passing of a baton to Merkel. Ahead of the visit, Obama said Merkel "has probably been my closest international partner these last eight years".

### Countering Putin or Erdogan

Merkel's striking message to Trump after his victory was not lost on observers - where her peers simply pledged close ties, she tied them to democratic values. She said that any "close cooperation" must be on the basis of the "values of democracy, freedom, respect for the rule of law and human dignity, regardless of origin, skin color, religion, gender, sexual orientation or political belief".

The remarks indicated the German leader is likely to accept - perhaps grudgingly - the mantle of "leader of the free world", remaining West and remind Trump of values, said Die Welt daily. "She is more than ever the woman who is countering men like Russian President Vladimir Putin or Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan," said the TAZ. Merkel, 62, does not have Obama's oratorical flourishes but her voice is increasingly forceful on the world stage. She put her fluent Russian to good use in mediating in the Ukraine conflict with Putin.

When most European countries were busy shutting their doors to refugees fleeing war in predominantly Muslim countries, Merkel let in nearly 900,000 people last year - a stance that Trump branded "insane".

### 'Can't Do This Alone'

Trump, who pledged to deport millions of undocumented migrants from the US, made anti-immigrant policies a key plank of his campaign. And few expect him to take the lead in countering Putin, given his open praise for the Russian strongman. If Trump makes good on his promises to rip up deals on free trade, climate change and Iran's nuclear program, as well as reconsider protection for NATO allies that haven't paid their dues, it could spell the end of the United States' post-World War II role as the guarantor of world peace.

Stefani Weiss, an expert on European integration and foreign policies at the Bertelsmann Foundation, said the US had started to retreat as "world police" under Obama and cede more responsibility to Europe. "This is a trend that will likely prevail and intensify with Trump's presidency," she said. It remains to be seen how effectively Merkel can push her agenda on the global stage, if Trump, as leader of the world's biggest economy, adopts contrary policies on migration, climate change and sanctions targeting Russia. —AFP



### CONGO FIRE COACH AFTER WCUP DEFEAT

**BRAZZAVILLE:** Congo have fired coach Pierre Lechantre, making him the fourth coaching casualty since last month's kick-off of the group stages of Africa's World Cup qualifiers. Congo's 1-0 loss at Uganda on Saturday followed a home defeat to Egypt in October and left the country bottom of Group E without any points. Congo also failed to qualify for January's African Nations Cup finals in Gabon. The decision was announced after the Frenchman met Congo Football Federation officials on Tuesday. He had been in the job for almost one year in which time Congo won just once in seven outings. The 66-year-old's departure follows the firing of coaches in Algeria, Gabon, Libya after October's opening series of group games. South Africa suspended coach Ephraim Mashaba on Sunday despite the weekend win over Senegal for allegedly insulting top football association officials and he will face a disciplinary hearing this week. If he is fired it will mean 25 percent of the coaches who started the group phase will have lost their jobs in less than 60 days. Lechantre won the African Nations Cup with Cameroon in 2000 and has also been national coach of Qatar and Mali. — Reuters



### MEN'S ROCKIES RACES OFF FOR LACK OF SNOW

**PARIS:** A lack of snow at Lake Louise, Canada, has seen World Cup circuit organisers cancel the men's downhill and super-G races scheduled there for late November. The races had already been put back twice and would have been the first of the men's speed events for the upcoming season on the weekend of November 26-27. "While we have good snow conditions on the upper mountain, we didn't have enough cold to get to the finish line for the men. We will continue our efforts for successful races for the ladies and look forward to the men returning next year," said Brian Lynam, race chairman at Lake Louise. The women have two downhills and a super-G scheduled for Lake Louise at the start of December. While snow in North America is late this season there's plenty at the European stations of Val-d'Isère in the French Alps and in the Italian Dolomites at Val Gardena. One of those two stations is likely to host the men's Lake Louise races. Further good news for ski fans is that World Cup downhill races at Beaver Creek in the United States on December 2-4 will go ahead thanks to good snowfall there. — AFP

### KENYA TO HOST HKAS SECURITY THREAT EASES

**NAIROBI:** Kenyan cricketers are looking forward to playing their first international game after a four-year hiatus when they host Hong Kong in a World Cricket League qualifier in Nairobi tomorrow. Due to security concerns, Kenya was forced to play their first home game of the tournament against the United Arab Emirates in Southampton, England in June 2015. Kenya has not played at home since a series of bomb attacks hit the capital in 2012. Coach Thomas Oduyo says playing at the Nairobi Gymkhana club would provide boost to his side, which is currently fifth in the competition. "It's pleasing for us that we are coming back to play in the conditions we are used to" said Oduyo, a former national team all-rounder. "This gives us an advantage over our rivals, Hong Kong who are playing here for the first time." The attacks followed Kenya's decision to send troops to Somalia to battle the Shabaab militant group, which had threatened the country's tourism sector. But of particular concern for Oduyo and his players is the sudden change of the weather in Nairobi, which has been experiencing heavy rains over the past two days. — AFP



Officials at the press conference of Jiu Jitsu 2016.



## RENAULT AL BABTAIN IS AN OFFICIAL PLATINUM SPONSOR OF INTERNATIONAL JIU-JITSU COMPETITION

**KUWAIT:** "Renault Al Babtain" announced its platinum sponsorship for the Kuwait International Championship of Jiu Jitsu 2016 in a press conference that took place yesterday, as part of its ongoing support of activities that aim to raise awareness on the benefits of sports for individuals and the society.

The Kuwait International Championship of Jiu Jitsu 2016 will take place in the Ice Skating Rink on the 18th and 19th of November.

The platinum sponsorship agreement with Renault Al Babtain was announced by the organizing committee of the International Championship of Kuwait for Jiu Jitsu. The Championship will kick off on Friday, 17th November with the participation of more than 300 athletes representing 20 countries, and a referee crew panel coming from the USA to supervise the championship.

The chairman of the organizing committee of the International Jiu Jitsu Championship in Kuwait, Abdulmohsen Saleh Al-Babtain, said: "The purpose behind this championship is to have Kuwait's name known as a sports hub internationally, and to provide the opportunity for young people to showcase their talents in a professional framework and under the supervision of the global judging crew."

"As a committee, we aspire to spread awareness and culture of sports for everyone, and employ the youth with their high energy spirit in sports, to create a generation that is capable to compete not only in Jiu Jitsu, but in all sports," he added. Makram Khater, Group General Manager - Marketing at Al-Babtain Group said: "In line with Renault and Al Babtain Group's strategies, we continuously support various sports and cultural initiatives

that help build a healthy society." "We are proud of our platinum sponsorship of the first ever Kuwait International Championship for Jiu Jitsu 2016, and we're looking forward to an electrifying, ground-breaking event," he added. The Public Authority for Sports is the strategic partner of the International Championship of Kuwait for Jiu Jitsu, in addition to the Kuwait Olympic Committee, acting as governmental partners. Other sponsors include Total as a platinum sponsor; together with the Gulf Bank of Kuwait, Spark Gym, Riselts Company - supplier of nutritional supplements, and Ibis hotel, as Gold sponsors.

The organizing committee of the championship is inviting the audience to participate in the success of this sporting event. Renault Captur cars will also be displayed during the event in the Ice Skating Rink.



Abdulmohsen Saleh Al-Babtain



Makram Khater

### IRISH LOOK TO DIASPORA BACKING FOR 2023 BID

**DUBLIN:** IRELAND'S 2023 Rugby World Cup bid is hoping the large Irish diaspora in the United States could be their trump card. The IRFU officially launched their candidacy for the global showpiece in Dublin on Tuesday, pitting themselves against France and potential bidders South Africa, both of whom have experienced hosting the tournament. A final bid must be submitted by June, with the winning decision announced by the World Rugby council on November 15, 2017. While France and South Africa have been there and done it, the IRFU hope their unique ability to spread the rugby gospel to the much desired North American market could swing things their way. Awarding the 2019 World Cup to Japan shows World Rugby are open to expanding the game beyond traditional borders, and the US is expected to join the race to host the 2027 tournament. Hosting the tournament in Ireland four years earlier, with a significant number of fans based in the North America expected to tune in to, or travel to the Emerald Isle, is something Philip Browne, the IRFU Chief Executive, was keen to mention in Dublin.

"It's going to be a World Cup involving the whole island of Ireland, and we have a good mix of stadia, all within easy walking distance of city centres," Browne said. "We hope by having standing terracing there will be accessible tickets for real rugby fans and we're going to provide those fans with a unique celebration of rugby, a unique fan experience."

"The other thing we bring to the party, which no one else can is the 80 million people around the world—the Irish diaspora. "One of the key issues for World Rugby is: How do you open up the American market? We possibly have the answer."

"We have 34.5 million [people] in the USA, another four million of Irish descent in Canada. There were 62,300

people at the match in Chicago. I'd say 45-50,000 were Irish supporters, even if they weren't all from Ireland. "There were about 7,000 people [travelling] from Ireland, but the rest were based in North America and the rest of the world. "We can provide a platform for World Rugby to promote the game into areas of the world they haven't been able to up to now." Winning the bid was said to be worth an estimated EUR800m to the Irish economy, while bid organisers predicted the largest number of travelling fans in tournament history, with Scottish, Welsh and English fans all expected to travel in their numbers to the island.

A list of 12 venues, four rugby and eight from the native Gaelic Games Association, was announced, with World Rugby expected to whittle that down to between eight and ten after the winning bid is chosen. To get the win, Ireland will need approximately 19 votes from the World Rugby Council, and discussions have already begun in earnest - with the IRFU speaking with their counterparts from the US and Canadian Unions in Chicago last week, ahead of their timely victory over reigning World Champions New Zealand.

"Listen, there are no votes in the bag at all," Browne said. "The reality is that we've just launched and it's up to us to go out over the next 12 months and persuade people of the value and benefit of our bid to world rugby. "Yes, we've started our conversations. We've started our conversations in Chicago with the Canadians and the US, we met people yesterday in London and we'll be meeting more people between now and Christmas, and after Christmas. "So the hard work really starts now in terms of actually putting the detail on the bid and then having those conversations, trying to persuade people that our bid is of value to world rugby."

The 2023 tournament will run from September 15 to November 4. — AFP

### IRELAND CAN INFLICT PAIN ON ALL BLACKS

**LONDON:** New Zealand were punished for showing "a lack of respect" to Ireland when they lost in Chicago and could be in for another shock in Saturday's rematch at Dublin's Aviva Stadium, according to former Lions wing Luke Fitzgerald.

Joe Schmidt's side delivered one of rugby's biggest shocks of the year by winning 40-29 11 days ago to end the All Blacks' 18-game winning run and become the first team since South Africa in 2004 to score 40 points against them.

Fitzgerald, who retired from rugby earlier this year with 34 caps for Ireland and one for the British and Irish Lions, said Steve Hansen's world champions would be a tougher proposition on Saturday as Ireland bid to become the first side to post back-to-back victories against them since South Africa in 2009.

"Do I think we can beat New Zealand again? I absolutely do," said Fitzgerald. "It's a really uphill task, they'll be really hurting after that [defeat in Chicago]."

"I think they showed a little bit of arrogance there and lack of respect with some of their selections."

"I think they'll be really, really pumped up for this one. I'd say they'll do a little bit more research behind the scenes on us. I'd say they were a little bit under-cooked in that department and, from my own perspective, some of the selection mistakes that they made they won't make them again."

New Zealand bounced back from the loss by making 12 changes to score 10 tries in a 68-10 win over Italy last Saturday, when Ireland also played free-flowing rugby to beat Canada 52-21.

The All Blacks are hoping influential second row Sam Whitelock is fit to return after injury, allowing them to move Jerome Kaino back to flanker. Ireland ruthlessly exploited that scrum weakness in Chicago and Fitzgerald expects a similar gameplan on Saturday.

"The things we did well, we can definitely do again," he said. "I think the pressure we got on all around the park, the desire we showed... I think in front of a packed Aviva Stadium we can definitely do that again."

Ireland's standout player in Chicago, scrum half Connor Murray, has recovered from a muscle injury and is fit to play. — Reuters



Joe Schmidt



## RUSSIAN OFFICIAL FACES CORRUPTION CHARGES OVER WORLD CUP

**MOSCOW:** Russian investigators are pressing graft charges against a former deputy governor of St. Petersburg linked to the construction of a trouble-plagued stadium that is to host World Cup matches in 2018.

The Investigative Committee said in a statement on Wednesday that Marat Oganessian, the city's deputy governor in 2013-2015, has been detained on suspicion of embezzling 50 million rubles (\$777,000) on a single contract to supply display screens for the new stadium. However, it could be only part of a much larger corruption case.

Investigators said Oganessian

arranged for a friendly subcontractor to win the contract and funneled the money out via shell companies. Investigators said they have filed a motion with a local court to jail Oganessian pending the probe. One official in the St. Petersburg city hall as well as three employees of the subcontractor are also under investigation in relation to the 69,000-seat stadium, provisionally called the Zenit Arena. Current deputy governor Igor Albin said on Twitter that "the total sum of damages at the stadium ... exceeds 700 million rubles (\$10.7 million)," citing evidence presented to the city government's construction department.

"No external events will influence the construction of the Zenit Arena now: the budget for the construction is balanced and everything that is needed has been bought," Albin added.

Yesterday's announcement came amid a blitz of corruption-related arrests and investigations in Russia. Late Monday, Economic Development Minister Alexei Ulyukayev was detained over an alleged \$2 million bribe, while Wednesday also saw reports of investigations at a state technology firm and a helicopter manufacturer.

The St. Petersburg stadium has taken almost a decade to build, prompting

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev to publicly call it "disgraceful." The stadium, which is to host a 2018 World Cup semi-final match, is set to cost more than \$600 million. Until the ruble dropped sharply in value in 2014 against the backdrop of international sanctions and a low oil price, the same ruble budget was worth more than \$1 billion, making it one of the most expensive soccer stadiums in history.

The St. Petersburg City Hall in July fired the general contractor over repeated delays and cost overruns, also saying that authorities have gone to the police because it has allocated \$39 million for

the construction which has been unaccounted-for. Later than month President Vladimir Putin issued a special decree, ordering officials in St. Petersburg to speed up the construction.

FIFA expects Zenit Arena to be delivered in December so that it is ready to host the Confederations Cup next year.

There have also been several deaths of workers during construction. In the past 12 months, three have died in accidents, and investigators said Tuesday a North Korean man working on the stadium had died of an apparent heart attack in a workers' communal area at the stadium. — AP

## WADA'S REEDIE UNDER FIRE FROM OLYMPIC COMMITTEES

**DOHA:** The World Anti-Doping Agency and its head Craig Reedie faced stinging criticism from national Olympic committees yesterday for its handling of the Russian doping scandal, days before its board meeting where the Scot is up for re-election.

Reedie, speaking to the general assembly of the Association of National Olympic committees (ANOC), said these were "troubled times" after the Russian doping affair, which resulted in dozens of athletes being banned from the Rio de Janeiro Olympics.

While calling for more sanctioning powers for WADA and closer cooperation with

doping laboratory, its anti-doping agency and athletics federation.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, who heads the ANOC and is an influential International Olympic Committee (IOC) member, called for a 'neutral' president to deal with the fallout of the doping crisis.

The IOC confirmed it had held talks with Reedie, who is standing for another three-year term, about appointing a neutral president in future and dropping the current system of rotating the choice of president between governments and sports bodies.

### NEUTRAL PRESIDENT

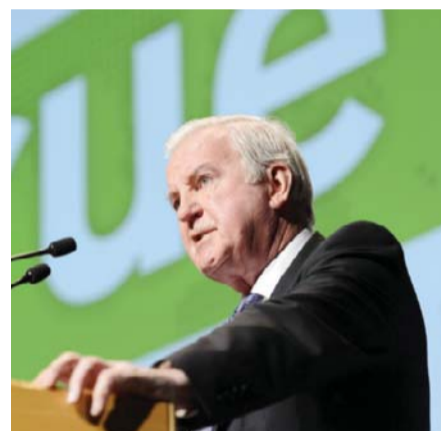
"During the discussions at the IOC Executive Board earlier this month, Sir Craig Reedie was advised of the intention of the IOC Executive Board to have in the future a neutral WADA President for the sake of the credibility and good governance of WADA," an IOC spokesperson said yesterday.

"At the meeting, Sir Craig accepted this approach and said he would not stand in the way of such a solution. Following this he received the support of the IOC Executive Board for his reappointment as WADA President," the spokesman said.

Sheikh Ahmad was concerned about the release of the second part of the McLaren report, due out in early December, and noted WADA's suspension of the Doha doping lab was announced the day before the general assembly in the Qatari capital on Tuesday. "There were questions of timing with the (McLaren) report and now we see it again with Doha, not because of cheating but because of procedures. The decision was only made on November 7, but came here on the day of the general assembly."

"I am now worried that the (second part of the) McLaren Report will come out in the first week of December during the IOC Executive Board, or the day after to undermine decisions there," Sheikh Ahmad said.

He suggested moving WADA from Montreal to Geneva, where the World Health Organisation has offices. Reedie apologised, saying the McLaren report had to come out before the Rio Games and that the Doha lab suspension announcement was not intentional. — Reuters



**LAUSANNE:** In this Monday, March 14, 2016 file photo Craig Reedie, President of the World Anti-Doping Agency, WADA, speaks during a Symposium for Anti-Doping Organizations (ADOs), in Lausanne, Switzerland. — AP

governments, Reedie, who is up for re-election on Nov. 20, had to defend his organisation's actions with half a dozen NOCs criticising him at the assembly. He also had to defend the timing of the release of part of the so-called McLaren report into doping in Russia shortly before the Rio Games in August. The report uncovered systematic state-sponsored doping in Russia.

The investigation, triggered by media reports of state-backed doping in Russia, led to a partial ban on Russians at the Rio Games and the suspension of the country's



**WINNIPEG:** Winnipeg Jets' Andrew Copp (9) and Chicago Blackhawks' Brian Campbell (51) go for the rebound in front of goaltender Corey Crawford (50) during the second period of an NHL hockey game on Tuesday in Winnipeg, Manitoba. — AP

## HELLEBUYCK STOPS 27 SHOTS TO HELP JETS BEAT BLACKHAWKS

**WINNIPEG:** Connor Hellebuyck made 27 saves for his first shutout of the season, rookie Patrik Laine scored his NHL-leading 12th goal and the Winnipeg Jets beat the division-leading Chicago Blackhawks 4-0 on Tuesday night. Rookie defenseman Josh Morrissey scored his first career goal, while forwards Chris Thorburn and Nic Petan got their first scores of the season for the second-place Jets. Nikolaj Ehlers had two assists, helping Winnipeg stretch its points streak to five games. Chicago goalie Corey Crawford was replaced by Scott Darling after letting in four goals on 22 shots. Darling made two saves. It was the first of five games between the Central Division foes this season.

### LIGHTNING 4, RED WINGS 3

Nikita Kucherov scored his second goal of the game with 1:10 left to give Tampa Bay a win over Detroit. Lightning captain Steven Stamkos left in the middle of the first period after limping off the ice favoring his right leg following a collision with the Red Wings' Gustav Nyquist along the boards. He did not return and the team said he has a lower-body injury. Stamkos and defenseman Nikita Nesterov also scored for Tampa Bay, which has won five of eight (5-2-1). Vladislav Namestnikov had two assists and Ben Bishop made 25 saves. Defenseman Ryan Sproul got his first career goal and had an assist, and Frans Nielsen and Henrik Zetterberg also scored for Detroit. Petr Mrazek stopped 18 shots.

### MAPLE LEAFS 6, PREDATORS 2

James van Riemsdyk scored three goals and Tyler Bozak had four assists, helping Toronto beat Nashville. Van Riemsdyk added an assist and Mitch Marner had a goal and two assists. Leo Komarov and William Nylander also scored to help Toronto improve to 6-2-0 at home. James Neal and Viktor Arvidsson scored for the Predators, who had their three-game winning streak halted. Frederik Andersen made 32 saves for Toronto, and Marek Mazanec stopped 26-of-32 shots for Nashville.

### PANTHERS 4, CANADIENS 3, OT

Aaron Ekblad broke his stick on an awkward slap shot that sneaked by goalie Carey Price in overtime, helping Florida beat NHL-leading Montreal. Ekblad wound for a shot from the right hash marks, but his stick snapped and the puck slid slowly toward the net. It deflected off the boot of defenseman Nathan Beaulieu before sliding past Price 2:59 into OT. Alex Petrovich, Kyle Rau and Denis Malgin scored for the Panthers, and Roberto Luongo made 34 saves. Max Pacioretty, David Desharnais and Paul Byron had goals for Montreal, which is in its first two-game winless streak this season. Price made 20 saves in his first loss of the season.

### SENATORS 3, FLYERS 2, SO

Erik Karlsson scored the only goal of the shootout to lift Ottawa over Philadelphia. Mark Stone and Kyle Turris scored for the Senators, who have won three of their last four. Craig Anderson scored through overtime and stopped all five attempts in the tiebreaker. Nick Cousins and Michael Raffl had Philadelphia's goals, and Steve Mason finished with 24 saves. The Flyers have lost four of five. Turris tied the score on a wraparound with 1:59 left in regulation. He then had a chance to get the winner in overtime on a 2-on-1 with Karlsson, but was stopped by Mason.

### DEVILS 2, STARS 1, OT

Adam Henrique scored 44 seconds into overtime to give New Jersey a victory over Dallas. Henrique and Kyle Palmieri skated in on Dallas goalie Antti Niemi on a 2-on-1. Palmieri sent a pass from the right side to Henrique at the edge of the left faceoff circle, and Henrique put the puck into

the lower left portion of the net. The game had been tied since Patrick Eaves' goal for Dallas at 10:33 of the first period. Damon Severson scored at 7:40 of the first for New Jersey, which won its fifth straight game. Niemi made 31 saves, including 16 in the second period. Cory Schneider had 23 saves for New Jersey.

### BLUES 4, SABRES 1

Jaden Schwartz and Kyle Brodziak scored early in the third period to lead St. Louis over Buffalo. Robby Fabbri and Scottie Upshall also scored and Jake Allen made 23 saves for the Blues, who snapped a three-game skid and beat the Sabres for the ninth straight time. Sam Reinhart scored and Robin Lehner stopped 27 shots for the Sabres, who lost their fifth consecutive game.

### HURRICANES 1, SHARKS 0

Joakim Nordstrom scored with 9:12 left, Cam Ward made 22 saves in his first shutout in over a year and Carolina beat San Jose. Ward got the 24th shutout of his career and first since he blanked Colorado on Oct. 21, 2015, while improving to 6-1 in his career against the Sharks. That helped the Hurricanes win their second straight to escape last place in the Metropolitan Division, in the process snapping the defending Western Conference champions' three-game winning streak. Aaron Dell stopped 32 shots in his third career game and his second start for the Sharks, who managed just two shots on goal in the second period before coming on strong in the third.

### BLUE JACKETS 2, CAPITALS 1, OT

Cam Atkinson scored 37 seconds into overtime as Columbus rallied to beat Washington. Atkinson buried a wrist shot off a faceoff from the right circle past goaltender Philipp Grubauer to extend Columbus' home winning streak to six. Zach Werenski scored the tying goal with just under seven minutes remaining for the Blue Jackets, and Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 26 shots. Nicklas Backstrom scored late in the second period for Washington, and Grubauer finished with 20 saves.

### AVALANCHE 4, KINGS 1

Semyon Varlamov had 32 saves, Patrick Wiercioch and Rene Bourque scored 22 seconds apart and Colorado beat Los Angeles. Gabriel Landeskog and Blake Comeau also scored for Colorado, and Wiercioch added an assist. Dustin Brown scored for Los Angeles and Peter Budaj

stopped 26 shots. It was the Kings' fourth straight loss after opening their five-game trip with a win in Toronto. The Avalanche had not scored a regulation goal for more than five periods before getting two quick ones at the start of the second period.

### FLAMES 1, WILD 0

Johnny Gaudreau's goal early in the first period held up and Chad Johnson stopped 27 shots for Calgary's first shutout of the season, fueling a victory that ended a four-game losing streak. Outscored 17-4 over the skid - with two of those goals from Gaudreau - Johnson and the Flames gave their NHL-worst goals against average a big boost. Their scoring differential, now at minus-19, is last in the league. Flames goalie Brian Elliott, formerly of the St. Louis Blues, has an 8-2 record with a 2.18 goals against average in 12 career games against the Wild, but Johnson got the call from coach Glen Gulutzan instead. Devan Dubnyk made 26 saves for the Wild and has given up only nine goals in his last eight games, stopping 245 of 254 shots.

### RANGERS 7, CANUCKS 2

Kevin Hayes and J.T. Miller scored two goals each, Henrik Lundqvist made 36 saves, and New York beat Vancouver. Mats Zuccarello had a goal and two assists, Nick Holden had a goal and an assist and Brandon Pirri also scored for New York, which has won three straight and eight of its last nine - with the lone loss in that stretch coming at home against the Canucks last Tuesday. Mika Zibanejad, Jesper Fast and Kevin Klein each added two assists. Brandon Sutter and Markus Granlund scored for Vancouver and Lucas Sbisa had two assists. Jacob Markstrom stopped 18 shots. The Rangers led 3-0 before Sutter got Vancouver on the scoreboard with 40 seconds left in the second period. Hayes and Miller then scored in the first 2 1/2 minutes of the third to help New York pull away.

### DUCKS 4, OILERS 1

John Gibson made 33 saves, Cam Fowler and Ryan Kesler had goals and Anaheim gave Edmonton a fourth straight loss. Nick Ritchie and Antoine Vermette also scored for Anaheim, and Corey Perry had two assists to take the team lead with 15 points. Leon Draisaitl scored for Edmonton and Cam Talbot made 23 saves. Edmonton controlled play throughout much of the second period, outshooting Anaheim 18-9, but it was forced to climb out of a 3-0 hole after the Ducks capitalized on special teams chances to score twice in the second. — AP

## STENSON HEADS STAND-ALONE QUARTET AT RACE TO DUBAI

**DUBAI:** The year-long Race to Dubai in the European Tour enters its home stretch with the season-ending DP World Tour Championship starting today, with four players still in the hunt to secure the honour of being called Europe's No 1.

The top-60 players after last week's Nedbank Golf Challenge qualify for the DP World Tour Championship, but 56 of them will have to contend for the \$8 million tournament, the richest on European Tour schedule outside the majors and World Golf Championships.

With 1,217,175 points for the winner, only No2 Danny Willett, No3 Alex Noren and No4 Rory McIlroy have the chance to catch up with Race to Dubai leader Henrik Stenson. England's Willett has the best chance just 299,675 points adrift, but he has been struggling with his form since finishing second in Italy in September third week. World No 2 and FedEx Cup champion McIlroy is 1,176,414 points behind Stenson and while he has conceded the race to European No 1, the Northern Irishman is keen to defend his title, which he also won in 2012.

"Mathematically I can win the Race to Dubai, but it's not going to happen," said McIlroy. "I wouldn't hold my breath. I think the three guys that are ahead of me are playing very good golf, especially the two Swedes, Henrik (Stenson) and Alex (Noren). Alex with what he's done over the past few weeks; Henrik has had a fantastic year, and so has Danny, obviously."

"So I don't expect those guys to play badly this week. I'm just concentrating on trying to win the golf tournament and if I can do that,

I'll be very happy."

Willett was hoping his final two sub-70 rounds in Nedbank Challenge would spark his bid to win the Race to Dubai, having finished second last year to McIlroy.

"We've got four rounds of golf left in what's been a pretty long season and slightly different situation to last year, but we still need to win the golf tournament to win the Race to Dubai," said the Masters champion.

"We're 300,000 points behind Henrik. If we can do what we can control this week and we can win a golf tournament, then nobody can take it away from us."

Noren is coming off a win last week in South Africa, his fourth in last 11 European Tour starts. But the hard-working Swede was taking nothing for granted, starting the week 633,436 points adrift of Stenson.

"Well, it's still a new tournament, new grass, new challenges. Obviously, it's nice coming in with a victory last week. I always thought it's easier if you have a good week before and you're a little bit more relaxed and enjoying it a lot," said Noren.

"But yeah, it's a new week and you always have your preparation. I'm not focusing too much on results. I am just trying to get my game in shape. I take it as it comes. I've never really been into looking at numbers like that."

Two players who qualified as top-60 for the tournament - Scotland's Russell Knox and Northern Ireland's Graeme McDowell - have withdrawn from the field and have been replaced by No61 and 62 France's Rafael Jacquelin and Chile's Felipe Aguilar. The top-10 players at the end of the tournament qualify for the \$5 million bonus pool. — AFP



**SUN CITY:** File photo shows Henrik Stenson of Sweden blast out of bunker on the green during the Nedbank Golf Challenge in Sun City, South Africa. — AP

## NHL Results/Standings

Ottawa 3, Philadelphia 2 (SO); Carolina 1, San Jose 0; Columbus 2, Washington 1 (OT); Toronto 6, Nashville 2; Florida 4, Montreal 3 (OT); Tampa Bay 4, Detroit 3; St. Louis 4, Buffalo 1; Calgary 1, Minnesota 0; Winnipeg 4, Chicago 0; New Jersey 2, Dallas 1 (OT); Colorado 4, Los Angeles 1; NY Rangers 7, Vancouver 2; Anaheim 4, Edmonton 1.						
<b>Western Conference</b>						
<b>Central Division</b>						
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS
Chicago	11	4	2	54	43	24
Winnipeg	9	7	2	54	50	20
St. Louis	8	6	3	41	48	19
Minnesota	8	6	1	41	29	17
Dallas	6	6	5	45	57	17
Nashville	6	6	3	41	43	15
Colorado	7	8	0	31	42	14
<b>Pacific Division</b>						
Anaheim	8	6	3	45	41	19
Edmonton	9	7	1	47	45	19
San Jose	9	7	0	37	36	18
Los Angeles	7	9	1	40	45	15
Calgary	6	10	1	40	59	13
Vancouver	6	10	1	35	55	13
Arizona	5	9	0	38	49	10
<b>Eastern Conference</b>						
<b>Atlantic Division</b>						
Montreal	13	2	2	56	38	28
Ottawa	10	5	1	38	37	21
Tampa Bay	10	6	1	54	45	21
Boston	10	6	0	41	38	20
Florida	8	7	1	44	42	17
Toronto	7	6	3	50	57	17
Detroit	8	8	1	44	47	17
Buffalo	5	7	4	30	41	14
<b>Metropolitan Division</b>						
NY Rangers	13	4	0	72	38	26
Pittsburgh	10	3	2	47	39	22
New Jersey	9	3	3	37	31	21
Washington	9	4	2	38	36	20
Columbus	8	4	2	47	33	18
Philadelphia	7	7	3	57	62	17
Carolina	5	6	4	39	46	14
NY Islanders	5	8	3	40	51	13

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L)



## IN MEXICO, FOOTBALL OR 'FUTBOL AMERICANO' IS A PASSION

**MEXICO CITY:** Dressed in their classic silver and black uniforms, the Raiders players huddle before kickoff. After words of encouragement and a prayer, the teenagers finish with head butts, shoulder slaps and a battle cry: "Uno, dos, tres... vamos!"

This is, after all, south of the border, where football has a century-old tradition, rivals soccer in popularity and millions of kids like the "Raiders de Arboleda" play "futbol americano" - American football - every weekend.

The NFL returns to Mexico after an 11-year absence when the Texans face the Raiders in a regular season game on Nov. 21 in sold-out Azteca Stadium. For the "Mexican" Raiders and others across the country, football is part of Mexican sports tradition as much as soccer, boxing and lucha libre.

"Football gives you the chance to take your passion to the field, to hit people and not get fined," said Raiders quarterback Gabriel Ayana, 16. "Maybe that's why it's so popular."

The NFL has around 25 million fans in Mexico, the biggest number outside of the US, and its base "is still growing," said Arturo Olive, director of the NFL office in Mexico. The league sponsors 6,500 teams in youth programs in 27 of 32 Mexican states, and estimates 2.5 million kids play flag football in elementary schools.

"Eight years ago, we played in only six states and had 120 teams," Olive said. "The growth has been exponential."

In a country steeped in soccer culture, and one that has hosted two FIFA World Cups, the love affair with football might be surprising. But Mexico has two popular college leagues with 36 teams, a six-team professional league, and up to 10 NFL games are on basic cable each week. The local soccer league has nine games each week, and not all of them are on TV.

Fans can even watch the Thursday and Monday night games at the movie theater. Soccer gets the big-screen treatment only for World Cup matches. "I also

used to play soccer," Ayana said, "but preferred this sport."

Football was introduced in the country in 1896 by Mexican students returning home from US colleges. They brought back "an oval shaped ball," said Alejandro Morales, a local football historian and founder of Mexico's football hall of fame. He said the first official match was played that year in the city of Jalapa in the Gulf state of Veracruz, where the students and their friends faced a team of American sailors from a US ship anchored in the nearby port.

Soon after, several teams were created in Veracruz and eventually the sport spread to Mexico City and local colleges. UNAM, the national state university with over 200,000 students, started playing in the 1920's, and by the 50's, most of the Mexican colleges where playing the game that, at the time, rivaled soccer in popularity. UNAM's famed Estadio Olimpico, site of the 1968 Summer Olympics, was used mainly for football in the first decade after its inauguration

in 1950. "Back then, football used to share the spotlight with soccer," Morales said. "Eventually that faded, because football was not seen as a business. It was played in college and they just wanted to help the students, while soccer was run by professionals."

Although football fell behind soccer, it remained hugely popular. The NFL noticed and on Aug. 5th, 1978, the Philadelphia Eagles played the New Orleans Saints in a preseason game in Mexico City. Some 30,000 fans packed the home of the Cruz Azul soccer team to watch the Saints 14-7 win in the first NFL game south of the border, and only the second played outside of the US or Canada. The NFL returned 16 years later, when the Houston Oilers played the Dallas Cowboys in Azteca Stadium in the first of six preseason American Bowls hosted by Mexico. The last was in 2001, when the Raiders played the Cowboys in the same venue.

The first regular season game was played in 2005, when the Arizona

Cardinals played the San Francisco 49ers in front of 103,467 fans in Azteca Stadium, then an NFL record. Since 2007, the league has held games annually in Great Britain - including three each season since 2014 - but never returned to Mexico, until now.

"We were ready when the opportunity presented itself," said Olive, who has run the NFL Mexico office since 2008. "Now we have a commitment to be successful with a game of this magnitude."

Azteca Stadium, built in 1966 and home to the popular soccer club America, underwent several renovations to meet NFL standards, including new locker rooms exclusive for the football teams, new ramps and improved communication systems. The size decreased from 100,000 to 84,000 to improve seating, and all tickets were sold out in less than two hours, Olive said. Most fans will be rooting for the Raiders, the fifth most-popular team in Mexico behind the Steelers, Cowboys, Patriots and 49ers, according to the NFL. —AP

## DJOKOVIC DIGS DEEP TO REPEL RAONIC ONSLAUGHT

**LONDON:** It has been missing for a while but Novak Djokovic rediscovered his warrior spirit to tame Canada's Milos Raonic 7-6(6) 7-6(5) in a riveting duel and guarantee progress from his group at the ATP World Tour Finals on Tuesday.

The 29-year-old Serb's recent malaise has cost him the world number one ranking he held for 122 weeks but when backed into a corner by an inspired Raonic, he responded in the belligerent manner that has earned him 12 grand slam titles. World number four Raonic threw the kitchen sink at the elastic-limbed Serb for two hours and 14 minutes, striking 42 winners and 14 aces but Djokovic, aiming for a fifth consecutive title at the year-end, was equal to everything-just. Having edged a high-intensity first-set when Raonic double-faulted on set point in a tense tiebreak, Djokovic looked to have broken the shackles in the second to lead 4-2. Raonic, who dialed up his mighty serve to speeds of 140mph, stormed back to rock Djokovic on his heels and came within a missed forehand of extending the match into a decider. But Djokovic produced a magical backhand flick at 5-5 in the night's second tiebreak, then an ace, before Raonic succumbed to an eighth successive defeat at the hands of the Serb



**LONDON:** Serbia's Novak Djokovic reacts after taking a 6-5 lead in a first set tiebreak against Canada's Milos Raonic during their round robin stage men's singles match on day three of the ATP World Tour Finals tennis tournament in London on Tuesday. — AFP

when his backhand flew wide.

With two wins in the bag Djokovic, whose form has tailed off since winning the French Open in June, is now assured of a semi-final spot although with 200 ranking points up for grabs in his final group match against Gael Monfils he will not be letting up. Raonic will be favourite to beat Dominic Thiem and reach the semis too, although the Austrian will be heartened by his 6-3 1-6 6-4 defeat of fellow debutant Monfils earlier. "I managed to hang in there mentally and stay strong and believed that the opportunities would come," Djokovic, who needs to better Andy Murray's performance here to reclaim the number one ranking, said.

"It could have gone either way this match. He's such a strong player and has got firepower. "Two tiebreaks against a big server is a great win." Despite having won only one set in their previous seven matches, Raonic betrayed no inferiority and forced Djokovic to save three break points early on.

Wimbledon runner-up Raonic was the aggressor throughout the opener while Djokovic absorbed the blows and waited to strike. Raonic did little wrong but was punished for not putting away a volley when leading 3-2 in the tiebreak and at 5-5 Djokovic produced a backhand lob of rare quality. The Canadian saved a set point with a barrage of bludgeoning forehands that cracked Djokovic's defences but then self-destructed, shanking a forehand return off a powder puff second serve before offering up a double fault. Djokovic was twice pegged back after breaking in the second set and had Raonic converted the set point that came his way when Djokovic tugged a backhand long at 5-6, the Canadian powerhouse might have taken some stopping. It was not to be though as Djokovic wriggled out of trouble to keep the pressure on Murray in the race to end the year as top dog for the fifth time in six seasons. "I could have won it, I gave myself the chances," Raonic, who won 83 points to Djokovic's 85, said. "I did a lot of good things. A lot of things to be proud of." Earlier, 23-year-old Thiem withstood a fightback from the mercurial Monfils to become the first Austrian to win a match at the event since Thomas Muster in 1996. — Reuters



**CLEVELAND:** Kyle Lowry #7 of the Toronto Raptors passes between Channing Frye #8 and Kyrie Irving #2 of the Cleveland Cavaliers during the second half at Quicken Loans Arena on Tuesday in Cleveland, Ohio. The Cavaliers defeated the Raptors 121-117. — AFP

## CAVALIERS CONTINUE TO ROLL OVER RAPTORS

**CLEVELAND:** LeBron James had 28 points and 14 assists, Kyrie Irving scored 24 points and the Cleveland Cavaliers beat the Toronto Raptors 121-117 on Tuesday night to match the best start in franchise history after 10 games. It was another tense matchup between the teams who met in last season's Eastern Conference finals and could get there again. Channing Frye's 3-pointer from the top of the key with 59 seconds left put the Cavs up by one. Cleveland then buckled down on defense, holding the Raptors scoreless until letting Kyle Lowry make a layup with 2.8 seconds left. Kevin Love added 19 points and 13 rebounds for the Cavs, who are 9-1 for the first time since 1976-77. Lowry scored 28 and DeMar DeRozan added 26 for the Raptors.

### HAWKS 93, HEAT 90

Dennis Schroder scored 18 points, Paul Millsap and Tim Hardaway Jr. each scored 15 and Atlanta pushed its winning streak to five games by beating reeling Miami. Mike Muscala scored 14 and Kent Bazemore added 12 for the Hawks. Dwight Howard had 11 points and 11 rebounds for the Hawks, before leaving with 3:06 left in the third quarter with a bruised left thigh.

Hassan Whiteside scored 19 points and grabbed an NBA season-high 25 rebounds for Miami, which has now dropped six straight. The eight Heat losses so far this season have come by an average of 6.9 points - with three of the last four coming by four points or less. Josh Richardson also scored 19 for Miami, which got 14 points from Tyler Johnson, 13 from James Johnson and 11 from Dion Waiters.

### HORNETS 115, TIMBERWOLVES 108

Kemba Walker scored 30 points and Charlotte blitzed Minnesota in the third quarter. Frank Kaminsky scored 12 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter for the Hornets (7-3), who snapped a two-game skid. Nicolas

Batum had 16 points and seven assists, and Charlotte outscored Minnesota 36-17 in the third quarter to wipe out a 12-point halftime deficit. Andrew Wiggins scored 29 points and Karl-Anthony Towns had 21 points and eight rebounds for the Timberwolves, who fell to 1-2 on their four-game homestand. Minnesota turned the ball over 18 times, which led to 20 points for Charlotte.

### BULLS 113, TRAIL BLAZERS 88

Jimmy Butler had 27 points and 12 rebounds, and Chicago opened a six-game road trip with a victory over Portland. Dwyane Wade had 19 points for Chicago, which extended its modest winning streak to three games. Former Blazers center Robin Lopez added 13 points and 11 rebounds. The Blazers, who had won five of six, were cold from the start, falling behind by as many as 26 points. Damian Lillard, who made just two shots from the field in the first half, finished with 19 points. Chicago, coming off a 106-95

victory over Washington on Saturday, was without Rajon Rondo because of a left ankle sprain. Jerian Grant made his first start of the season and had 18 points.

### LAKERS 125, NETS 118

D'Angelo Russell scored 32 points and Julius Randle added 17 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists for his second career triple-double in surprising Los Angeles' victory over Brooklyn. Timofey Mozgov had 20 points and six rebounds for the Lakers, who maintained a steady lead down the stretch of their fourth win in five games at Staples Center this season. Russell hit seven 3-pointers and had eight rebounds during the highest-scoring performance by any Lakers player in their impressive start to the season. Los Angeles' balanced play under new coach Luke Walton has put the Lakers (7-5) two games above .500 for just the second time since April 2013. Brook Lopez had 30 points and 10 rebounds for the Nets. —AP

## MAQDIS IN FUTURES PROFESSIONALS TENNIS Q-FINALS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Tennis National Team player Abdallah Maqdis reached the quarter finals of the singles in the Futures Professionals International Championship 2016 being held under the patronage of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah at the Kuwait Tennis Federations Courts at Yarmouk Club. The tournament will continue until November 20 under the supervision of the International Tennis Federation, with a large number of tennis international professionals participating.

Maqdis defeated Italy's Michael Longo 6-4, 6-1, and in his earlier match he defeat-

ed Swiss Arya Maratchi 6-2, 7-6 Maqdis will meet Britain's Markos Willis, who is seeded fourth in the tournament.

President of Kuwait and Arab Tennis Federations Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber congratulated Maqdis on his win and the level he displayed in the tournament. He also thanked Yarmouk Sport Club for its contribution to the success of the tournament.

This is the third tournament among three tournaments in three weeks that make up the Kuwait futures tournament this year, being held under total sponsorship by the Public Authority for Sports.



Abdallah Maqdis

### NBA results/standings

Cleveland 121, Toronto 117; Atlanta 93, Miami 90; Charlotte 115, Minnesota 108; Chicago 113, Portland 88; LA Lakers 125, Brooklyn 118.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference				
Atlantic Division				Northwest Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB				
Toronto	7	3	.700	-	Portland	7	5	.583
Boston	5	5	.500	2	Utah	7	5	.583
NY Knicks	4	6	.400	3	Oklahoma City	6	5	.545
Brooklyn	4	7	.364	3.5	Denver	3	7	.300
Philadelphia	1	9	.100	6	Minnesota	3	7	.300
Central Division				Pacific Division				
Cleveland	9	1	.900	-	LA Clippers	10	1	.909
Chicago	7	4	.636	2.5	Golden State	8	2	.800
Milwaukee	5	4	.556	3.5	LA Lakers	7	5	.583
Detroit	6	5	.545	3.5	Sacramento	4	7	.364
Indiana	5	6	.455	4.5	Phoenix	3	8	.273
Southeast Division				Southwest Division				
Atlanta	8	2	.800	-	San Antonio	8	3	.727
Charlotte	7	3	.700	1	Houston	6	4	.600
Orlando	4	7	.364	4.5	Memphis	5	5	.500
Washington	2	7	.222	5.5	Dallas	2	7	.222
Miami	2	8	.200	6	New Orleans	2	9	.182



## INDIA SPINNERS IN FIRING LINE AGAINST CONFIDENT ENGLAND

**VISAKHAPATNAM:** India's much-hyped spin attack are under pressure to deliver in the second Test at Visakhapatnam starting today against an England side high on confidence and boasting new teenage sensation Haseeb Hameed.

Nineteen-year-old Hameed, dubbed "Baby Boycott" for his unflappable style akin to batting great Geoffrey Boycott, scored 31 and 82 on debut during last week's drawn first Test, the latter the highest by a teenager for England.

He shared a 180-run second innings opening stand-a record for England in India-with captain Alastair Cook, who made 130, as the home side's spinners endured a torrid start to the five-Test series.

India's spin trio of Ravichandran Ashwin, the world's top-ranked bowler, Ravindra Jadeja and Amit Mishra had been expected to rip through England's batting line-up but wilted in the Rajkot test.

The tourists sparked with four centuries-from Cook, Joe Root, Moeen Ali and Ben Stokes-as the hosts clung on for a tense draw, losing six wickets on the final afternoon after being set a notional 310 to win. There had been questions marks over the quality of England's slow bowlers before the game but they outperformed their Indian counterparts with leg-spinner Adil Rashid taking seven wickets.

"Our batters played well against their spinners, and our spinners and seamers all bowled well. The way the guys played in this Test should give us plenty of confidence," said England coach Trevor Bayliss after the first match finished on Sunday.

England's strong showing against the top-ranked Indians banished memories of last month's defeat to minnows Bangladesh when they were undone by rookie spinner Mehedi Hasan.

Ashwin recorded just 2-167 in the first

innings and 1-63 in the second. Mishra finished on 1-98 and 2-60 while Jadeja's solid 3-86 was followed by 0-47 in the second innings.

### RAHUL RETURNS

However, the pitch at the Visakhapatnam ground in Andhra Pradesh state is expected to be more favourable to India's spinners than Rajkot's flat and grassy track. "We're under no illusions that these next four Tests could be even tougher," said Bayliss. England could include leading wicket-taker James Anderson, who has recovered from a shoulder injury, while India are also set to make changes.

Opener Lokesh Rahul was added to the squad on Tuesday after proving his recovery from a hamstring injury sustained batting against New Zealand last month by scoring a century in a domestic fixture on Monday.

He looks certain to return at the top of the order to replace Gautam Gambhir who struggled in Rajkot with scores of 29 and 0.

All-rounder Hardik Pandya could make his debut and add pace to India's attack.

"We can still play an extra bowling option and keep putting pressure on the opposition," said captain Virat Kohli.

India (from): Virat Kohli (capt), Ravichandran Ashwin, Gautam Gambhir, Ravindra Jadeja, Ramit Mishra, Karun Nair, Hardik Pandya, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Lokesh Rahul, Wriddhiman Saha, Mohammed Shami, Ishant Sharma, Umesh Yadav, Jayant Yadav, Murali Vijay. England (from): Alastair Cook (capt), Moeen Ali, James Anderson, Zafar Ansari, Jonny Bairstow, Jake Ball, Gary Ballance, Gareth Batty, Stuart Broad, Jos Buttler, Ben Duckett, Steven Finn, Haseeb Hameed, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Ben Stokes, Chris Woakes. —AFP



**HARARE:** Sri Lanka batsman Asela Gunaratne and Sachith Pathirana make a run during the One Day cricket match against West Indies at Harare Sports Club in Harare, yesterday. The two teams are playing in a triangular series featuring Zimbabwe. —AP

## W INDIES BOWLERS SHINE IN BONUS POINT WIN

**HARARE:** Superb bowling allowed the West Indies to overcome the absence of several key players as they beat Sri Lanka by 62 runs in the second one-day international in Harare yesterday.

After managing just 227 all out with the bat, Ashley Nurse and Shannon Gabriel grabbed three wickets apiece and captain Jason Holder picked up two as Sri Lanka were bowled out for 165 inside 44 overs.

As a result the West Indies also picked up a bonus point, putting them level on five points with Sri Lanka, who beat Zimbabwe in Monday's series opener in the triangular series.

"It's good to start off with a win in a short tournament," said Holder at Harare sports club. "We fell short of our batting target but made up for it in the field, where I thought we were outstanding."

"It's good to start turning things around, and hopefully we can get some consistency going and start maturing." Shorn of their biggest stars, including batsman Darren Bravo after he was sent home for comments made on Twitter about West Indies Cricket Board president Dave Cameron, the West Indians lost the toss and were asked to bat first in seam-friendly conditions.

They soon found themselves on the back foot, with Johnson Charles finding third man and fellow opener Kraigg Brathwaite run out by a direct hit from Nuwan Kulasekara.

Although their next three partnerships all reached more than 40, none were able to set up a significant total as Evin Lewis was caught behind off Sachith Pathirana's offspin for 27, and debutant Shai Hope was bowled for 47 by Asela Gunaratne.

Kulasekara then had top scorer Jonathan Carter caught for 57 at deep square-leg, and once Rovman Powell's entertaining cameo had been halted on 44 by Nuwan Pradeep, Kulasekara effected another run-out and grabbed a second wicket with the ball.

Despite the challenging conditions, the West Indian total looked short until a brilliant first spell from Holder yielded the wickets of Dhananjaya de Silva and Kusal Mendis, with a Charles direct hit helping to reduce the Sri Lankans to 16 for three.

"The bowlers did a great job to keep them to 227, but the batsmen didn't turn up today," said Sri Lanka captain Upul Tharanga.

"We lost three early wickets and never recovered - we just couldn't form a partnership."

It was Nurse who prevented any meaningful recovery in the middle of the innings, dismissing Tharanga and Gunaratne just as they were finding their feet at the crease, before having top scorer Pathirana caught in the deep as he threatened to bring Sri Lanka back into the game.

With Gabriel cleaning up the tail, the West Indies secured their first win outside of the Caribbean since March 2015. The series will now move to Bulawayo, where Zimbabwe will take on the West Indies on Saturday. —AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**HARARE:** Scoreboard in the one-day international between Sri Lanka and West Indies on yesterday.

West Indies		Sri Lanka	
J. Charles c Perera b Lakmal	2	D. de Silva c Hope b Holder	3
K. Brathwaite run out	14	K. Perera run out	4
E. Lewis c Dickwella b Pathirana	27	N. Dickwella c Benn b Gabriel	28
S. Hope b Gunaratne	47	K. Mendis c Nurse b Holder	4
J. Carter c de Silva b Kulasekara	54	U. Tharanga c & b Nurse	12
R. Powell c Dickwella b Pradeep	44	A. Gunaratne lbw b Nurse	18
C. Brathwaite c Lakmal b Pradeep	14	S. Jayasuriya c Powell b C. Brathwaite	31
J. Holder run out	2	S. Pathirana c Lewis b Nurse	45
A. Nurse not out	5	N. Kulasekara c Lewis b Gabriel	16
S. Benn lbw b Kulasekara	7	S. Lakmal b Gabriel	0
S. Gabriel lbw b Lakmal	0	N. Pradeep not out	0
Extras (6lb, 5w)	11	Extras (4w)	4
Total (all out, 49.2 overs)	227	Total (all out, 43.1 overs)	165
Fall of wickets: 1-7 (Charles), 2-27 (K. Brathwaite), 3-76 (Lewis), 4-129 (Hope), 5-172 (Carter), 6-209 (Powell), 7-214 (C. Brathwaite), 8-215 (Holder), 9-226 (Benn), 10-227 (Gabriel)		Fall of wickets: 1-7 (de Silva), 2-8 (Perera), 3-16 (Mendis), 4-51 (Dickwella), 5-64 (Tharanga), 6-79 (Gunaratne), 7-139 (Pathirana), 8-151 (Jayasuriya), 9-160 (Lakmal), 10-165 (Kulasekara)	
Bowling: Kulasekara 10-1-37-2, Lakmal 9.2-1-45-2, Pradeep 10-1-55-2, Jayasuriya 4-0-19-0, Pathirana 6-0-25-1, Gunaratne 10-1-40-1.		Bowling: Gabriel 8.1-0-31-3, Holder 8-0-16-2, C. Brathwaite 9-0-34-1, Carter 1-0-4-0, Nurse 10-1-46-3, Benn 7-1-34-0.	
		Result: West Indies won by 62 runs	



**VISAKHAPATNAM:** Members of England cricket team play a friendly game of soccer during a training session ahead of their second test cricket match against India in Visakhapatnam, India, yesterday. —AP

## AUSSIE CHIEF SELECTOR QUILTS OVER TEST CRISIS

**SYDNEY:** Australia's chairman of selectors Rod Marsh quit with immediate effect yesterday after a run of five heavy Test defeats left the team in crisis, saying it was time for "some fresh thinking". The former wicketkeeping great, 69, stepped down amid recriminations about the poorly performing team which crashed to a third-straight home series defeat to South Africa on Tuesday.

"This is my own decision and no one within Cricket Australia has pressured me or even suggested that I should do this," Marsh said in a statement. Cricket Australia said it would hold an extraordinary meeting later Wednesday to decide on an interim replacement, with an

we build for the future," Marsh said. "I have always had the best interests of Australian cricket foremost in my heart, and that's why I have made this decision." Australia's four-man selection panel now consists of Mark Waugh, Trevor Hohns and coach Darren Lehmann. The panel has been under heavy scrutiny over the shocking results of Steve Smith's national team, culminating in their latest batting collapse of eight for 32 in their innings and 80 runs defeat to the Proteas in Hobart this week.

### DARK DAYS

Lehmann declared only four players-captain Smith, David Warner, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood-were sure to keep their places after Australia's second demoralising collapse in the Hobart Test. Only hours before Marsh's announcement, Cricket Australia chief James Sutherland voiced support for him to see out his contract. "He said he will finish up June and we will make decisions about where and how we transition to that in the future," Sutherland told reporters in Hobart. Former Test fast bowler Jason Gillespie and former Test captain Ricky Ponting have been touted as possible successors. Australia's team announcement for next week's third and final day-night Test in Adelaide has been delayed until Sunday so selectors can assess players' form in domestic Sheffield Shield matches. It has been a stormy series for the Australians, starting with a stunning first innings collapse of 10 for 86 in the first Test in Perth, when Australia squandered a 158-run opening stand to surrender meekly to the Proteas by 177 runs.

Critics pointed to other recent dark days in Australian cricket, including their demolition for 60 by England at Trent Bridge last year. Australia now face being whitewashed in a home series for the first time in their history if they lose to the Proteas in Adelaide. The last time they lost six straight Tests-against India and England in 2013 — the coach at the time, Mickey Arthur, was sacked. Sutherland earlier Wednesday told reporters he would not be stepping down from his post as CA chief executive which he has held for 15 years.

Marsh, who replaced the previous chairman of selectors John Inverarity in May 2014, played 96 Tests from 1970-1984, taking a then-record of 355 dismissals as wicketkeeper. — AFP



**ADELAIDE:** This file photo taken on December 1, 2015 shows Australia's cricket chairman of selectors Rod Marsh speaking at a press conference at the Adelaide Oval. Marsh has stepped down with immediate effect after a humiliating run of five heavy Test defeats. — AFP

announcement "in due course". Marsh, one of several leading cricket officials under intense pressure, had previously insisted he would see out his contract which runs to the middle of next year. But on Wednesday he said it was time for a new perspective after a run of defeats which has prompted severe criticism in Australian media. "Clearly... it is time for some fresh thinking, just as it is for our Test team to welcome some new faces as



**HARARE:** West Indies batsman Evin Lewis is in action during the second match of tri-nation one-day international series Sri Lanka vs West Indies at Harare Sports Club yesterday. — AFP

## N ZEALAND DRAW ON MCCULLUM HEROICS FOR PAKISTAN CLASH

**CHRISTCHURCH:** Pakistan and New Zealand both claimed the high ground on the eve of today's first Test in Christchurch, with the Black Caps drawing inspiration from Brendon McCullum's classic farewell innings.

Just days after a 7.8-magnitude earthquake rattled the city and devastated parts of the South Island, Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq looked to cash in on a perceived lack of confidence in the New Zealand ranks after their disastrous tour of India, where they suffered a series whitewash. But although Pakistan are on a high after crushing the West Indies last month, New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson claimed his side was rejuvenated by returning to home conditions and familiar seamer-friendly wickets. After being flummoxed by Indian spin in all three Tests in October, Williamson said New Zealand's challenge was to pick themselves up. "It's important when you come off the back of that India tour, which was extremely tough, that we still come back here and play with freedom, express our skills. When we do we play our best cricket," he said. "There will be a little bit of

movement for the seam bowlers but we've played in these conditions a lot and certainly back ourselves to play positively."

When New Zealand last played at Hagley Oval, former skipper McCullum smashed a world record 54-ball century against Australia in a brutal onslaught that produced 145 runs off 79 deliveries. Williamson scored seven off 69 in the same innings. "Brendon was the complete opposite. It was a great example of someone playing with freedom and I think that came from the confidence of knowing your own conditions," he said.

### MIND GAMES

New Zealand, who have not won a series against Pakistan since 1985, will delay finalising their side as late as possible although it has been confirmed opener Jeet Raval will make his debut. One of four pace bowlers in the squad is likely to be omitted to make room for leg-spinner Todd Astle.

Misbah said the Pakistan line-up was already confirmed but he was giving nothing away

before the toss other than to say seamer-friendly conditions would not hinder them.

They played in similar conditions in their drawn series against England earlier this year. "That experience is really going to help us here, because of the kind of confidence we gained from that," Misbah said. Pakistan have their own motivation, having lost their top world ranking and Misbah said they were keen to get it back and despite New Zealand pitches not being renowned for taking turn, his ace remained spinner Yasir Shah. Yasir, with 116 wickets at 27.04 from 19 Tests "can get something out of any conditions," Misbah said.

"It's all about building pressure, bowling in the right areas, playing with the mind of the batsman," he added.

"Regardless of the conditions, you can be effective and good bowlers always learn ways to get people and I believe he is that kind of bowler." New Zealand struggled against spin in India where senior batsman Ross Taylor, with a career average of 46.24, could only average less than 15 in six innings. —AFP



## GERMANY'S MUELLER SURPRISED BY SAN MARINO ROW

**BERLIN:** Thomas Mueller admits having been surprised by accusations of arrogance and disrespect for saying Germany's 8-0 rout of minnows San Marino had "nothing to do with professional sport".

On Sunday, Alan Gasperoni, the San Marino National Olympic Committee's press officer, posted an open letter to Mueller on Facebook, listing 10 reasons Germany's trip to the minnows for a 2018 World Cup qualifier was useful.

Mueller said he was taken aback by Gasperoni's angry rant, which poked fun at the cliched German habit of wearing

white socks with sandals and accused the Germans of thinking they could win by "bullying" San Marino.

Having captained Germany in Tuesday's goalless draw with Italy in Milan, Mueller said he had meant no disrespect.

"I was a bit surprised, because I hadn't meant that at all," Mueller told German broadcaster ARD.

"I had been asked a few questions, which I had answered honestly and seriously, and had tried to look at both sides."

"The reader often reads only the

headline and then makes an impression, which I had once again underestimated."

Last Friday's 8-0 drubbing in heavy rain kept Germany top of their 2018 World Cup qualifying group with a perfect record of four wins while San Marino, ranked 199 places below the Germans by FIFA, remain bottom.

When asked about the value of such international miss-matches, Mueller admitted the question was "hard to answer", adding "romantics say such games have their place".

Mueller says his "nothing to do with professional football" comment was tak-

en out of context. "My statement in the interview after the match on Friday related to the question of the sporting value of the game in San Marino in relation to the risk of injury," Mueller wrote on his Facebook page on Tuesday.

"It was taken out of context by some media, which seems to have given some people the wrong impression, influenced by a sometimes humorous social media post by a former official of the San Marino Football Association.

"I want to clarify here that I replied in the answer respectfully to illuminate both sides of the topic."

Mueller says he will not shy from speaking his mind. "I will continue to express my opinion in the future, even if I run the risk of getting a few flies buzzing around my ears," added the 27-year-old. The matter could be put to bed over a beer.

Gasperoni has apologised for poking fun at Germans in his rant and wants to meet Mueller when San Marino play the return qualifier in Nuremberg next June. "I am sure everything will be settled with a hand shake and when we are in Germany, we could go for a beer together," added Gasperoni. — AFP

## BARCA SEALS BIG DEAL WITH JAPAN'S RAKUTEN

**BARCELONA:** Spanish giants FC Barcelona sealed a massive shirt sponsorship deal yesterday with Japanese online retailer Rakuten worth at least 55 million euros (\$59 million) a year. One of world football's most lucrative shirt sponsorship deals sees Japan's leading e-commerce company replace Qatar Airways, Barcelona's shirt sponsor since 2013, confirming Asia's appetite for major investment in European football.

With the pulling power of top stars like Lionel Messi and Neymar, Barcelona's success on the pitch ensures the club exerts a huge draw on advertisers.

"The base contract is 55 million euros per year, with a bonus of 1.5 million euros per year if the club wins the La Liga and five million euros if it wins the Champions League," Barcelona's head of marketing, Manel Arroyo, told a news conference at the club's Camp Nou stadium. Qatar Airways were reported to have paid 35 million euros for the final year of their deal taking them up to the end of the 2016-17 season.

### MESSI, NEYMAR TOP DRAW

Barcelona boasts some of the world's most recognisable stars-vital marketing assets for the club's partners — who have millions of followers on social media, promising invaluable exposure to sponsors. Argentine striker Messi is one of the most popular athletes in the world on social media, with more than 78 million fan followers on Facebook alone. Barcelona's new sponsorship deal however falls short of the seven-year deal which Manchester United signed with Chevrolet which will earn the English club \$560 million-about \$80 million (70 million euros) per year. Barcelona-once renowned for never having had a sponsor on their shirts — had been looking to replace their Qatar Airways contract which was seen as below market value for a number of seasons.

It extended its contract last year with the airline for one year while it looked for a

new partner. Rakuten, seeking to boost its global image, is Japan's biggest e-commerce company with more than 13,000 employees in Japan and turnover of more than two trillion yen (18.2 billion dollars) in the first three quarters of the year. The company is already involved in domestic sport in Japan, owning J-League club Vissel Kobe and pro baseball outfit Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles. Barcelona took its first step towards ending its tradition of shunning sponsors on its shirts in 2006 when it agreed to bear the logo of Unicef. In 2011 Qatar Foundation replaced the charity on the club's shirts under a new deal.

### Second shirt sponsorship deal

Qatar Airways signed its first sponsorship deal with the club in 2013. But many of Barcelona's members had expressed their opposition to the club's relationship with the Gulf state.

Former club president Joan Laporta has pledged to end the sponsorship deal if re-elected to the post but he was soundly beaten by Josep Maria Bartomeu in the club's 2015 election.

Barcelona's new sponsorship deal confirms the interest in Asian investors in European football and it comes as the club is set to begin work in 2018 on an extensive renovation of their Camp Nou home. The refurbishment will see the capacity of Europe's biggest stadium extended to 105,000 and an open facade to allow views across the city. A budget of 420 million euros has been estimated for the project that will be financed in large part by proceeds from sponsorship. Barcelona in May signed a 10-year kit agreement with Nike, which it expects to bring in at least 150 million euros per season when the arrangement takes effect in the 2018-19 season.

The club is expected to post a record turnover of 679 million euros in the 2015-16 season and surpass arch-rival Real Madrid as the world's richest club in the annual rankings by Deloitte.—AFP



**SAN JOSE:** United States' Omar Gonzalez, left, clears the ball under pressure by Costa Rica's Johan Venegas during a 2018 World Cup qualifying soccer match in San Jose, Costa Rica, Tuesday. Costa Rica won the game 4-0. —AP

## COSTA RICA ROUTS US AS AMERICANS DROP TO 0-2

**SAN JOSE:** The United States put itself in a deep hole in World Cup qualifying with one of its worst performances in decades. Taking advantage of defensive mistakes, Costa Rica routed the U.S. 4-0 Tuesday night to drop the Americans to 0-2 for the first time in the final round of the North and Central American and Caribbean region. "A very, very bitter moment for us. There's no doubt about it," US coach Jurgen Klinsmann said. "We didn't imagine going into the hexagonal with two defeats right at the beginning."

Johan Venegas scored in the 43rd minute, Cristian Bolanos doubled the lead in the 69th and second-half substitute Joel Campbell beat beleaguered goalkeeper Brad Guzan in the 74th and 77th minutes in the worst margin of defeat for the US in a qualifier since a 5-1 defeat at Mexico in November 1980.

It was the biggest losing shutout margin in a qualifier since the U.S. fell 6-0 at Mexico in 1957. Combined with Friday's 2-1 loss to Mexico at Columbus, Ohio, the US finds itself in a quick deficit in the hexagonal, which resumes in March. "I'm very disappointed, obviously," US Soccer Federation President Sunil Gulati said. "There's obviously some concern. Mexico qualified with 12 points. There's a lot of points left on the board - 24 to be exact."

Ticos fans sounded air horns at the end of a match that reignited questioning of Klinsmann's tactics. The US dropped to 0-9-1 in qualifiers at Costa Rica. Klinsmann is still confident he's the right person to lead the team, but understands the scrutiny. "When you lose two games and obviously two World Cup qualifiers right after each other, there will be a lot of comments," he said. The Americans, who had had not lost a home qualifier in 15 years before last week, figure they will win their four remaining home games and pick up points on the road.

The top three teams qualify for the 2018 tournament in Russia, and the No. 4 finisher advances to a playoff against Asia's fifth-place nation. "There's going to need to be some urgency," US captain Michael Bradley said. "We're going to have to look collectively real hard in the mirror at ourselves and understand it's not been a good start but the reality of this hexagonal format is that nothing is lost yet, not even close. So anybody who thinks that is sorely mistaken."

Central defenders John Brooks and Omar Gonzalez, and right back Timmy Chandler had particularly poor games. Brooks and Omar Gonzalez started in the center of the back line. Geoff Cameron, who usually starts alongside Brooks, missed both qualifiers this month after hyperextending a knee during Stoke's Premier League match against Hull on Oct. 22.

Costa Rica, which won its opener 2-0 at Trinidad and Tobago, went ahead after a Brooks giveaway. Randall Azofeifa took a short pass from Jose Salvatierra in the center circle and played a long ball into the corner, where Bolanos ran it down on its third bounce. Gonzalez was slow to close on Bolanos, who crossed for Venegas just outside the 6-yard box. Bolanos beat Brooks to the ball and sent a header across Guzan for his seventh goal in 30 international appearances.

Bolanos scored after a turnover by 18-year-old midfielder Christian Pulisic near midfield. Salvatierra sent a pass down the flank to

Venegas, and his cross found Bolanos in front, with Chandler a step late. Ronald Matarrita created the final two goals by Campbell. On the last goal, Campbell took the ball over Brooks' right foot as the American defender stabbed to make a play to no avail. He was a step behind all night on the slick, chunked-up turf.

"I said to the team that it won't be the last 4-1 defeat in their career," Klinsmann said. "We'll get here some lessons but definitely it's a bitter moment because we wanted to do far, far better than what we did."

There was some whistling during "The Star-Spangled Banner" from the capacity crowd of about 35,000 in Estadio Nacional, where the field is surrounded by an athletics track and crowd noise dissipates - even from a band in the second deck. The venue appears less intimidating to visitors than old Estadio Ricardo Saprissa, where fans were directly behind the benches. Chandler at right back and midfielder

Jermaine Jones are suspended for the next qualifier, at home on March 24 against Honduras, because of yellow-card accumulation. Both were cautioned by Mexican referee for fouls against Costa Rica captain Bryan Ruiz, Chandler in the 11th minute and Jones in the 37th.

Costa Rica, a 2014 World Cup quarterfinalist, nearly went ahead in the 14th minute when Bolanos centered for Ruiz, who chested the ball and sent an overhead kick directly into Guzan's face. And in the 57th, Venegas beat Chandler to a punt by Navas and had a clear shot on Guzan, who made a leg save.

While Bolanos repeatedly sliced diagonal long balls through the midfield, the U.S. rarely threatened. Pulisic took a pass from Jones in the 20th, dribbled to the end line and crossed, but Bobby Wood couldn't get to the ball before goalkeeper Keylor Navas. Wood slid the ball behind Navas in the 41st, but the U.S. didn't have anyone in front. — AP



**BARCELONA:** CEO of Japanese company Rakuten Hiroshi Mikitani (R) exchanges documents with Barcelona's president Josep Maria Bartomeu after signing an agreement between FC Barcelona and its new sponsor Rakuten Inc., at Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona yesterday. — AFP

## EPL'S SHAKE-UP PLANS ABANDONED

**LONDON:** Plans for the biggest shake-up in English football since the introduction of the Premier League have been abandoned after talks between the main participants broke down.

The Football League (EFL) proposed a raft of changes called the Whole Game Solution, including a five-division league - one more than present - with 20 teams in each, and a winter break. But discussions with the Football Association (FA), the English game's governing body, founded on a proposal to move FA Cup games to midweek from their traditional weekend slots, the EFL said in a statement on Wednesday. "If the weekend dates are not available (for league games), then there is simply no way we can meet the financial conditions as outlined at the very outset," said EFL chief executive Shaun Harvey.

Earlier this month, the FA announced a new six-year international broadcasting deal for the FA Cup, with British media reports putting its value at about 820 million pounds (\$1.02 billion).

This made the competition too lucrative

to tinker with, from the FA's point of view, and it refused to agree a new calendar for the changes which would have been introduced for the 2019-20 season.

"The stance the FA has adopted has brought the discussions to a premature end before fully understanding what the financial outcome from the creation of a new distribution model could be," added Harvey. The EFL believes change is necessary to ease fixture congestion, make weekend games more special and help supporters by cutting down midweek travel.

Under the plans, unveiled in May, each club outside the Premier League would have seen their home fixtures reduced from 46 to 38, a contentious proposal that some clubs opposed. Reacting to the news that the changes would not now go ahead, Julian Tagg, chairman of League Two (fourth-tier) side Exeter City, told the BBC: "Many fans across the country didn't like the idea of change and I think that was the same with our club. I think there'll be a little bit of a sigh of relief." The FA was not immediately available to comment. — Reuters

## BUFFON REACHES LANDMARK AS GERMANY HOLD ITALY

**MILAN:** Gianluigi Buffon earned a European record-equalling 167th cap as Italy played out a goalless friendly draw with their Euro 2016 quarter-final tormentors Germany in Milan on Tuesday.

The 38-year-old Buffon, who made his Italy debut in 1997, is now level with retired Spain legend and fellow goalkeeper Iker Casillas.

Although Buffon is now just 17 behind world record-holder Ahmed Hassan of Egypt (184), the appearance of AC Milan's Gianluigi Donnarumma for a more positive second half was a reminder that retirement may not be too far off.

Hosting Germany just four months after a dramatic penalty shoot-out defeat ended their Euro 2016 hopes in Bordeaux, Italy were looking to end their three-game winless streak against the world champions.

But the hosts failed to transform a promising finish to the game into a win, Torino striker Andrea Belotti notably hitting the upright late on. "We were facing the world champions and gave very little away," said Italy coach Giampiero Ventura.

"Apart from hitting the post, we had four or five situations that we could have done better with." Like Ventura, Germany boss Joachim Loew has one eye on the future and made several changes to his established starting line-up. By the end, he was largely happy with their performance.

"It was a good and important result for us, especially our young players," he said.

"We can be totally satisfied, even though we could have tightened up a little in defence." Juventus midfielder Sami Khedira and Arsenal's Mesut Ozil were both rested, and regular skipper and goalkeeper Manuel Neuer was out with a virus,

handing Bernd Leno the gloves for the night.

Buffon had to be alert to thwart Thomas Mueller as he chased a ball over the top and the Juventus 'keeper was also grateful to Davide Zappacosta for producing a timely block after Leon Goretzka's flick sat up nicely for Mueller to unleash a first-time drive.

Donnarumma, just 17, replaced Buffon to warm applause for the start of the second half, claiming only his second cap after making his debut against France in September.

Italy threatened when Belotti drilled a high shot wide of post and bar after finding space from 20 yards out. Belotti and Ciro Immobile, who combined have scored seven of Italy's last nine goals, were finally beginning to gel.

But the hosts saw claims for a penalty waved away after Belotti squeezed between Shkodran Mustafi and Jonathan Tah before tumbling in the area.

Germany brought on Serge Gnabry, who hit a hat-trick on his debut in a 8-0 rout of San Marino last Friday, for Goretzka while Mueller made way for Kevin Volland.

And Volland had the ball in the net when he flicked Joshua Kimmich's drive across goal past Donnarumma, only to be ruled offside. Italy enjoyed a positive finish, but failed to breach the Germany goal.

Substitute Federico Bernardeschi should have done better than shoot tamely at Leno and Lazio striker Immobile curled a shot wide after being set up by Belotti. The Torino forward could have nicked the win late on, but he saw his low angled strike come off the base of the far upright with Leno beaten. — AFP



WADA's Reddie  
under fire from  
Olympic committeesCosta Rica routs  
US as Americans  
drop to 0-2

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2016

IN MEXICO, FOOTBALL OR 'FUTBOL AMERICANO' IS A PASSION Page 17



SAN JUAN: Argentina's Lionel Messi (3-L) and Colombia's Carlos Sanchez (L), James Rodriguez (2-L) and Daniel Torres eye the ball during their 2018 FIFA World Cup qualifier football match in San Juan, Argentina, on Tuesday. — AFP

## MESSI LIFTS ARGENTINA, SANCHEZ SAVES CHILE

**SAO PAULO:** The return of Lionel Messi to an under-pressure Argentina team has finally paid off. After a lackluster performance last week against Brazil last week, the five-time FIFA player of the year winner inspired a 3-0 victory over Colombia for the South American World Cup qualifiers on Tuesday. He scored the first with a breathtaking free kick, gave two assists, dribbled through Colombia's defense several times and coordinated his teammates on the pitch.

Argentina is now in fifth position with 19 points after 12 games, with six games to go. Colombia dropped to sixth with 18 points. The first four in South American qualifiers have automatic qualifying positions for the next World Cup and the fifth will be in an international playoff for a spot.

The home victory eased some of the pressure on coach Edgardo Bauza, who received the dreaded vote of support from Argentina's football association during the week. In Santiago, Alexis Sanchez scored twice after returning from injury to give Chile a 3-1 win over Uruguay. Chile is now fourth, with 20 points, and Uruguay remained second with 23.

Leaders Brazil beat eighth place Peru 2-0 in Lima to move closer to securing a spot at Russia 2018. Teenage striker Gabriel Jesus, who will soon move to Manchester City, scored his fifth goal in six games for the five-time

World Cup champions.

Elsewhere, third-placed Ecuador beat bottom-of-the-group Venezuela 3-0 at home and now has 20 points. Venezuela was stuck on five. Ninth-placed Bolivia had a 1-0 victory over seventh place Paraguay and now has seven points. Paraguay is on 15. The 13th round of South American World Cup qualifiers will be played in March 2017.

Messi opened the score with a perfect free kick to the left of Colombia goalkeeper David Ospina, on 9 minutes. Only 13 minutes later, Messi managed to dribble through the Colombian defense and cross to striker Lucas Pratto, a contentious choice by coach Bauza ahead of Juventus targetman Gonzalo Higuain.

Argentina could have scored many more goals in the second half, with Messi still leading the efforts. The third only came at 83 minutes after the Barcelona star began a play with a backheel kick.

Seconds later he stole the ball from a Colombia defender, cut into the penalty area and put in a smooth low cross he found Angel Di Maria, who effortlessly scored.

Colombia's coach Jose Pekerman said his team clearly felt the absence of two key defenders: suspended Oscar Murillo and injured Yerry Mina.

After the defeat against Brazil, Messi openly said he

was disappointed with Argentina's performance, and used an expletive to say the team needed to improve to qualify for Russia 2018. On Tuesday, with an increased box-to-box awareness throughout the match, Messi led by example rather than words.

Words were also in short supply after the game. On behalf of the whole team, Messi said no players would speak to the press, in response to a wave of criticism in Argentinian media.

### CHILE 3-1 URUGUAY

Uruguay scored first against Chile, through South American qualifiers top goalscorer Edinson Cavani, at 16 minutes.

But Chile, the Copa America champions, responded to pull one of their best wins in the tournament so far. That was largely thanks to a superb performance by Arsenal striker Alexis Sanchez, who returned from injury, scored a brace and is now just one goal short of Marcelo Salas as the top goalscorer ever for La Roja.

The beginning of the turnaround began with striker Eduardo Vargas nodding a cross from the left to level the score in the dying moments of the first half. At 60 minutes Uruguayan goalkeeper Fernando Muslera failed to save a powerful shot by Sanchez from the edge of the box. At 75, Sanchez scored again, in a smooth fin-

ish in front of Muslera. Uruguay had a chance to make it 3-2, but Chilean goalkeeper Claudio Bravo stopped a penalty taken by striker Luis Suarez.

Chile and Uruguay will each carry a major problem for their next match in South American qualifiers, which could be critical to both. Chile will not have midfielder Arturo Vidal against Argentina and Uruguay will miss Suarez against Brazil.

### PERU 0-2 BRAZIL

Brazil did not need to be at its best in securing a 2-0 victory over Peru in Lima; the sixth in a row for the leaders of the South American qualifiers under new coach Tite. After a lackluster first half, Brazil went ahead in the 57th minute when Peru's defense gave the ball away inside the penalty box to 19-year-old Gabriel Jesus, who made an easy and calm finish. In the 77th minute, the Peruvian defense again was at fault, allowing Jesus to set up midfielder Renato Augusto for another simple finish.

Brazil ends the year with 27 points, which was enough to qualify in other editions of the South American qualifiers. Only months ago it was lagging sixth under previous coach Dunga. Peru, who started dreaming of going to their first World Cup in 32 years after a 4-1 victory at Paraguay last week, will stay at eighth position with 14 points. — AP

## ASPAS, ISCO DENY ENGLAND VICTORY

**LONDON:** Substitute Isco struck deep in stoppage time to earn Spain a 2-2 draw and deprive Gareth Southgate of victory in his final game as England interim manager on Tuesday.

Goals from Adam Lallana and Jamie Vardy had set England up for an impressive win, but Spain debutant Iago Aspas reduced the arrears in the 89th minute before Isco levelled with practically the last kick. Southgate, who lost Lallana to injury in the first half, cursed his luck on the touchline, but having gone four games unbeaten since replacing Sam Allardyce, the job is still expected to be his full-time.

"The players over the period of the four matches couldn't have given any more," Southgate said. "It feels like a defeat for the players, but I couldn't be more proud of what they've done. It was a healthy, positive performance."

While victory eluded England at the last, the vibrant nature of their performance at Wembley will help to erase lingering memories of their Euro 2016 humiliation by Iceland. Isco's 96th-minute strike extended Julen Lopetegui's unbeaten record to six games since he succeeded Vicente del Bosque as Spain coach in the aftermath of their Euro 2016 exit at Italy's hands. "In the first half England were better than us. They started really sharply," said Lopetegui. "Things got even tougher in the second half, but that's when we

showed our character and never-say-die spirit. "To pull a draw out of the fire with two goals at the end was great. It showed we never give up." Vardy won the penalty that yielded England's opening goal in the ninth minute, but he was perhaps fortunate to still be on the pitch.

With less than five minutes on the clock, the Leicester City star followed through after clearing the ball downfield and caught Cesar Azpilicueta high on the Chelsea defender's right shin.

### VARDY DOES THE MANNEQUIN

But Romanian referee Ovidiu Alin Hategan kept his cards in his pocket and within four minutes he was pointing to Spain's penalty spot.

After Jesse Lingard robbed Thiago Alcantara, Lallana curved a gorgeous pass into the box from the right and despite a loose first touch, Vardy succeeded in drawing a foul from goalkeeper Pepe Reina.

Reina went the right way from the penalty, to his left, but Lallana put enough height on the ball to register his third goal in three England outings.

The fates were to conspire against the Liverpool midfielder midway through the first half, however, as injury forced him off, with Theo Walcott coming on in his place.

Shy of a mishit Vitolo shot, Spain had failed to trouble England and Lopetegui changed tack on the half-hour, ditching



**LONDON:** Spain's Iago Aspas, left, scores his side's first goal during the international friendly soccer match between England and Spain at Wembley stadium in London, Tuesday. — AP

his initial 3-5-1-1 system for a more conventional 4-1-4-1.

But the traffic remained one-way in the second half and after Walcott had seen a shot deflected into the side-netting, England made it 2-0 in the 48th minute.

Stand-in captain Jordan Henderson's cross from the right was met with a brilliant diving header from Vardy, who had previously gone 14 games without scoring for club and country.

He celebrated by freezing stockstill in the manner of the 'Mannequin Challenge' social media fad, with Walcott and Sterling joining in. Lopetegui awarded senior debuts to Ander Herrera and Aspas in the second half, yet still the hosts advanced, Reina saving one-handed from Walcott and Nacho clearing off the line from Lingard. When Spain did threaten, England substitute goalkeeper Tom Heaton denied David Silva and substitute Alvaro Morara, with Aspas putting the rebound over the bar in the first instance.

West Ham United left-back Aaron Cresswell won his first England cap as a late substitute, but was upstaged by Celta Vigo forward Aspas and Real Madrid midfielder Isco, his fellow entrants.

Aspas halved the deficit, drifting in from the right and curling home, before Isco atoned for an earlier miss by chipping down Dani Carvajal's pass and squeezing a shot between Heaton's legs. — AFP

## SAUDI ROYAL SEES SPORT FUND AT MORE THAN \$600M

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia plans to develop its sports sector with a fund worth more than \$600 million helped by the privatization of football teams, a senior official said yesterday. "The fund will be no less than 2.5 billion riyals (\$666 million)," Princess Reema Bint Bandar al-Saud told the MISK Global Forum. On Monday the kingdom's main economic coordinating body, the Council of Economic Affairs and Development, called for creation of the fund within three months.

It aims to "support different sports, development and investment in the relevant areas," while contributing to privatization of sports clubs and the establishment and funding of amateur sports programmes, the official Saudi Press Agency said.

Most professional football clubs in Saudi Arabia are reportedly government owned. Saud, named three months ago as Vice President for Women's Affairs at the General Authority for Sports, said privatization of football would provide "the seed capital of our future."

Her agency is trying to boost the kingdom's international competitiveness and to get more Saudis exercising. She said her own focus is on promoting healthy lifestyles, which would also have economic benefits in the conservative kingdom where sport opportunities, particularly for women, are limited.

"Today, the value of sports as a sector could equal, unbelievably, 250,000 jobs for women over the next two years," she told the forum which linked business leaders with young Saudis in a bid to inspire them to help diversify the oil-dependent economy.

She said she wants to encourage young people to walk more and to ride bicycles, but in the Saudi capital there are only about two shops selling bikes for serious adult riders.

Saud urged young entrepreneurs to take advantage of such market potential. — AFP





**TRUMP-FUELLED RISK RALLY SHIFTS TO JAPANESE BONDS, EURO**



**NEW DELHI:** A security guard uses indelible ink to mark the fingers of people entering to exchange discontinued currency outside an Axis Bank branch in central New Delhi yesterday. — AP

**CURRENCY SWAP SETS OFF ENDLESS LINES OF FRUSTRATION**  
 INDIAN MERCHANTS REPORT PLUMMETING BUSINESS

**NEW DELHI:** The first people showed up at the bank long before dawn, forming a line in the cold and the smog and silently waiting for the chance to withdraw their own money. They left more than seven hours later, each holding the handful of bills, worth \$60 at the very most, that they'd been allowed to take home. By midday, the lines snaked back and forth across the parking lot outside the Axis Bank branch in central New Delhi. Occasionally, a policeman carrying a long bamboo club would slap someone who stepped out of line. No one complained. In a crowd like this, largely working-class and uneducated, no one talks back to a policeman. Especially not one carrying a club.

**Desperate for cash**

"They keep telling us that that this is good, and maybe they're right," said Shahida Parveen, a 36-year-old woman whose family had almost no usable money left. "But I don't see anything good happening." This is just one bank, in one city, in a country of 1.3 billion people, millions of them increasingly desperate for cash amid a chaotic government effort to crack down on corruption by banning high-denomination currency notes.

Last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced in a surprise nighttime TV address

that all 500- and 1,000-rupee notes, worth about \$7.50 and \$15, would be withdrawn immediately from circulation, a move designed to fight corruption and target people who have been dodging taxes by holding immense stockpiles of cash, known in India as "black money." In a nation hobbled by corruption, and where less than 3 percent of people file tax returns, the plan at first earned widespread approval. But as the days ticked by, it became increasingly clear that the government was ill-prepared for a plan that suddenly pulled 86 percent of the country's money supply out of circulation.

Families began hoarding small-denomination currency, merchants reported plummeting business and salaries went unpaid. Many businesses were refusing to accept the only new note rushed into circulation, worth 2,000 rupees, because they were unable to make change for it. The government says it's also trying to get new 500-rupee bills into circulation, but they remain rarities. Modi acknowledged the transition to the new currency might be briefly difficult, but said the government "spent long hours trying to figure out how to minimize the inconvenience."

"The poor are now enjoying a sound sleep, while the rich are running around to buy sleeping pills" because of anxieties over their

hoarded money, he said. But in the parking lot outside the Axis Bank, no one was talking about a sound sleep. "This is only to harass people like us," said Parveen, a stay-at-home mother whose husband works as a small-time broker for rental properties, but has had no work for the past week. Hundreds of millions of Indians do not have bank accounts and use only cash. Many businesses only accept cash. "The people with all the black money, they'll find a way to manage."

**'Black money'**

She's right. The price of gold spiked in the hours after Modi's announcement, as the rich looked for ways to get rid of their old currency. Accountants say there has been a surge in questions about laundering cash, with one saying a client had come in admitting he needed to get rid of more than \$5 million in discontinued notes. Others have used a range of ploys, from buying expensive train tickets that can be refunded later, to getting fake receipts, backdated to before Modi's announcement, to make their black money look legitimate. "Do you see anyone with black money here?" demanded Chote Lal, 59, who had taken the day off from his office job to wait in line. "Only the poor are getting hurt. Who else is suffering?"

A New Delhi businessman with connections to underground currency traders said it was still fairly easy to exchange the withdrawn currency - as long as you're willing to pay twice the legitimate exchange rate to get rid of the old notes. "They can take as much as you need to get rid of," the businessman said, speaking on condition of anonymity to be able to speak freely about illegal transactions. How are money launderers getting rid of outdated currency? Some are presumably using corrupt bureaucrats or banking officials. Others, however, are getting help from people in line at tens of thousands of banks across India.

Some of those waiting at Axis, like Parveen, were there to exchange their own money. She pulled a wallet from her purple-and-pink purse, revealing two crumpled 100-rupee notes and two 50-rupee notes, worth a total of about \$4.50. It was all her family of five had left to spend, at least until she got to the front of the line and could exchange 4,000 rupees in the old currency. But it was an open secret that more than a few of those waiting with her were being paid to exchange currency for wealthier people. "I'm not doing that, but many of these people are exchanging for others," said Sahil Saluja, a young airline employee, gesturing around him. He eventually gave up waiting after more than four hours in line.

**Often-shifting regulations**

The often-shifting regulations allow a one-time swap of 4,000 rupees, or about \$60, in exchange for smaller notes to meet immediate needs. That limit was raised to 4,500 rupees yesterday. The government insists the system will be back to normal by the end of the year. Overwhelmed banks had no reliable way to ensure that people didn't line up more than once, so on Tuesday, the government announced that banks would begin using indelible ink to mark the fingers of people swapping scrapped currency notes. India uses the same system during elections, to stop people from voting repeatedly.

Old notes can be deposited into bank accounts before the end of the year, though the government says it will investigate deposits above 250,000 rupees, or about \$3,700. Immense fines will be levied on anyone found to have been illegally avoiding taxes. But for at least the next week, and perhaps many weeks, hours-long bank lines and strict limits on withdrawals (most people are limited to about \$30 a day), mean lots of frustration ahead. The government, meanwhile, insisted all was well. The "public need not be anxious," said a weekend statement from India's national Reserve Bank. "Cash is available when they need it." — AP

**ABU DHABI RALLIES ON BANK MERGER SPECULATION; SAUDI, EGYPT REBOUND**

**MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS**

**DUBAI:** Abu Dhabi bank shares surged yesterday because of renewed speculation that the government might merge more banks as part of an efficiency drive, while other regional markets rebounded, encouraged by strong global bourses and oil prices. The Abu Dhabi index jumped 2.6 percent, its largest single-day gain since June, but trading volume continued to decline from a seven-month peak hit earlier this month.

Quoting unnamed sources, Bloomberg reported Abu Dhabi was considering more financial sector mergers after First Gulf Bank and National Bank of Abu Dhabi announced earlier this year that they planned to merge in the first quarter next year. FGB shares closed 2.6 percent higher and NBAD shares added 1.5 percent. Union National Bank surged 12.3 percent and Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank jumped 5.8 percent on speculation they might form the next merger. Officials at the banks and in the government were not available to comment, though several bankers familiar with the industry told

Reuters that formal talks were not under way and the idea of any merger was still in very preliminary stages.

A UNB-ADCB merger would create the United Arab Emirates' third biggest bank and "offer a better footing for ADCB to compete with the bigger players as underwriting capacity increases significantly," Arqam Capital said in a note. Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank climbed 4.7 percent after Bloomberg said it could be merged with Al Hilal Bank. Bank officials could not be reached for comment and Bloomberg said it was possible that none of the potential mergers would proceed. Blue chips led Dubai's main stock index 2.1 percent higher with Emaar Properties gaining 2.8 percent and Dubai Islamic Bank adding 2.4 percent.

Saudi Arabia's index rebounded 2.4 percent to 6,648 points, 55 points below technical resistance on its July peak. Ninety-five percent of traded shares advanced. All but one petrochemical producer rose with Saudi Basic Industries adding 2.1 percent as Brent oil futures traded over \$46 a barrel. — Reuters

**RED SEA 'MEGACITY' - A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR SAUDI REFORMS**

**RIYADH:** As Saudi Arabia seeks to diversify its oil-dependent economy, the chief of a Red Sea "megacity" says his project is pointing the way forward. A decade after its conception, the King Abdullah Economic City-an integrated industrial, residential and tourism centre-is profitable and in line with a government push which intensified this year to develop the private sector, Fahd Al-Rasheed told AFP in an interview.

KAEC was one of several "economic cities" touted for development 10 years ago, during the reign of the late king Abdullah, as special zones where the private sector could thrive. Rasheed said there were "so many challenges" in the project's early years but that the KAEC is now thriving. "We are profitable for the last five years," he said, "and we are today at the highest cash position that we've ever been." Oil makes up the bulk of Saudi revenue but a collapse in crude prices since 2014 created a record deficit and intensified economic reform efforts.

In April, the country's powerful Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman announced an ambitious new economic plan dubbed Vision 2030 that aims to promote private sector investment. The scale of the project

has raised doubts, but Rasheed said he is convinced of "the strong fundamentals of the Saudi economy" and that the KAEC shows "the model works". Developed by Emaar, The Economic City, the Saudi-listed unit of Dubai's Emaar Properties, the project has seen \$10 billion in investment. Rasheed said it has signed contracts with more than 120 companies, many of them French. Renault is assembling trucks, drug maker Sanofi has a plant, and Total is also established.

The project is promoting seaside residential developments and expects to be home to 10,000 people within a few months, with more than 40,000 targeted by 2020. "We are the largest residential developer in terms of sales in the country, although we are concentrated in a remote site" north of Jeddah, said Rasheed. A high-speed rail line due next year will connect KAEC with Jeddah and Islam's holiest cities of Mecca and Medina, "which will give us access to 12 million residents in the western region within one hour," Rasheed said.

This will boost another goal of Vision 2030, which is tourism development, he said. "We are building golf courses, theme parks, zoos, safaris", he said, calling tourism "the most strategic sec-



**RIYADH:** Fahd Al-Rasheed, the chief of the King Abdullah Economic City — an integrated industrial, residential and tourism centre, gives an interview to AFP yesterday. — AFP

tor" for the KAEC. Home so far to a luxurious waterfront resort, the city expects to receive 150,000 visitors this year and targets 1.5 million by 2020. Rasheed was speaking on sidelines of the MISK Global Forum, which ends Wednesday and aims to link business leaders with young Saudis in a bid to inspire their involvement in economic diversification. — AFP



# EGYPT SAYS HAPPY WITH IMPACT OF CURRENCY FLOAT; INFLOWS SURGING

## PLAN TO CUT PRIMARY BUDGET DEFICIT STILL ON TRACK

**DUBAI:** Egyptian authorities are happy with financial market movements since they floated the pound, and inflows of foreign exchange into the banking system are surging, deputy finance minister Ahmed Kouchouk said yesterday. The Egyptian pound fell to near 18 to the US dollar after its peg of 8.8 was scrapped on Nov 3 in an effort to lure more foreign investment and shut a black market in dollars. In the last few days it has become more stable at around 15.50.

Kouchouk, speaking to a small group of foreign reporters at a financial conference in Dubai, said volatility was natural after a currency float and the pound's moves were "not a surprise or concern". "Banks are competing, we are seeing that rates are fluctuating, each bank has its own buying and selling rate - all the ingredients of a flexible, efficient system are there now," said Kouchouk, an architect of Egypt's economic reform plan.

He described the central bank as "very happy with what's happening". Data from the central bank shows Egypt's banking system has received about \$1.5 billion in net hard currency inflows since the float, around 10 to 15 times the level of weekly inflows before the pound was freed, Kouchouk said. He called that number encouraging and predicted inflows would increase further. Foreign holdings of government securities - including Treasury bills and bonds - have increased by between \$700 million and \$900 million since the float, Kouchouk estimated. Some of that rise is due to foreign money that was already inside Egypt but some is due to new money from abroad, he said.

As part of its effort to obtain more hard currency, Egypt plans to return to the Eurobond market. Authorities expect to make a decision early next week on when they will hold investor roadshows for the first issue, Kouchouk said. He

declined to give a number for the size of the debt sale, saying it would depend on market conditions given recent volatility in global fixed income prices. The pound's depreciation promises to raise the government's costs for importing wheat and energy, potentially slowing its drive to cut a budget deficit that totaled 12.2 percent of gross domestic product in the last fiscal year through June.

But Kouchouk said the depreciation would also help government revenues by inflating some payments such as Suez Canal revenues, and that its fiscal reforms had incorporated expectations for depreciation. For these reasons a weaker pound will not have a big impact on state finances and the government is still on track to cut its primary budget deficit, which excludes interest payments, by about two-thirds in the current fiscal year from last year's 3.4 percent of GDP, and to eliminate it next year, he said. — Reuters

# CHERFAN'S LEADERSHIP RECOGNIZED BY FORBES

## NISSAN SALES IN THE GULF INCREASED BY 50%

**DUBAI:** At a recent award ceremony held by Forbes Middle East, Samir Cherfan, Managing Director of Nissan Middle East, was honored with the prestigious 'Global Meets Local' Award. Cherfan's milestone achievements in the region have earned him the accolade as the only automotive leader to be in the Forbes rankings for 3 consecutive years. The event took place at Waldorf Astoria - Palm Jumeirah, and recognized the top 100 executives for their accomplishments while heading global corporate organizations. Cherfan secured the 29th position in the overall ranking. "I am honored to receive such a significant industry award which reflects the considerable effort and talent within the Nissan organization and at its dealership partners.

This award is recognition that the Nissan brand is heading in the right direction and that the organization is demonstrating its ongoing commitment to become one of the fastest growing automotive brands in the region," said Cherfan on receiving the award. Since Samir's took the helm at Nissan Middle East in 2012, the company's business grew by 45 percent in market share across the GCC. The single biggest milestone was the increase of 216 percent growth in sales for the Nissan Patrol models.

Cherfan also played a vital role in increasing Nissan's performance in the region on quantity and quality of its business, customer satisfaction and service excellence, as well as its brand power investments. Nissan's Revival Plan in KSA has been instrumental to its success in the region. In November 2013, Nissan renewed its bond to the Saudi Arabian market by establishing a direct presence in the Kingdom through the formation of Nissan KSA, and also appointed Alissa Auto as its strategic partner. Recently in March 2016, Nissan also announced the appointment of Petromin as a second strategic partner in the Kingdom.

Looking to the GCC in 2016, Nissan listed its business priorities as: growth with focus on Saudi Arabia, sustained customer leadership and continued investment in the Nissan brand including CSR engagement. In addition, Nissan Middle East has also established a distribution company in Turkey to add to its overall growth. The "Global Meets Local" study was inspired by the prestigious "Forbes Global 2000", a ranking of the biggest, most powerful and most valuable publicly listed companies in the world. The innovative study highlights the significance of the MENA region and its top executives on the global corporate stage.



# TURKISH LIRA AT A RECORD LOW, YUAN AT 8-YEAR LOW

**LONDON:** The Turkish lira fell to a new record low yesterday and the Chinese yuan hit an eight-year low, although emerging market stocks rose for a second day, helped by a continued pull back in US Treasury bond yields. Emerging currencies have been under pressure in the face of dollar strength, but domestic woes have accentuated the losses in some markets, with the lira tumbling 0.7 percent to a record low on signs of more discord between Turkey and Europe.

President Tayyip Erdogan has accused Belgium of being a centre for supporters of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and the cleric who Ankara says orchestrated a failed July coup. He has also accused Germany of not being committed to the fight against terrorism. Roxana Hulea, a strategist at Societe Generale, said the lira was likely to remain under pressure. "We do consider Turkey as being one of the least protected during this renewed pressure on EM," she said. The Chinese yuan also hit an eight-year low as the central bank set a weaker daily guidance rate.

Commerzbank noted that after the yuan's inclusion in the special drawing rights basket of

currencies in October, the yuan had depreciated by more than 3 percent, triggering concerns over a possible collapse. "It is hardly the case, in our view. On one hand, (the yuan) index is generally stable since August, suggesting (its) weakness reflects a broad US dollar strength." But the bank's analysts also noted China's foreign reserves had dropped for four consecutive months since mid-2016, indicating that the central bank was still actively intervening in the market. The yuan has depreciated 5.4 percent against the dollar so far this year.

The Mexican peso, which has been pummeled hardest by Republican Donald Trump's shock US election win last week, slipped 0.3 percent from a six-day high, after gaining 2 percent on Tuesday. Analysts expect the volatility to continue until there is more clarity on Trump's policies. "It is a market consensus that the peso is undervalued, but because it is at the eye of the storm it is very difficult to advocate bottom fishing at this point," said Hulea. The Russian rouble also weakened against the dollar, down 1.9 percent, as investors eyed developments in the government following the dismissal of the economy minister over allegations of corruption. — Reuters

## National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report

At 02:00 PM Previous Day

Global Stock Indices						
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %	
Dow Jones	18,868.69	18,923.06	54.37	▲	0.29	8.60
NASDAQ	5,218.40	5,275.62	57.22	▲	1.10	5.36
S&P 500	2,164.20	2,180.39	16.19	▲	0.75	6.65
Financial Times	6,792.74	6,778.03	-14.71	▼	-0.22	8.58
DAX	10,735.14	10,706.93	-28.21	▼	-0.26	-0.34
CAC 40	4,536.53	4,525.51	-11.02	▼	-0.24	-2.41
Swiss	7,909.20	7,917.18	7.98	▲	0.10	-10.22
Nikkei 225	17,668.15	17,862.21	194.06	▲	1.10	-6.15
Topix	1,402.98	1,421.65	18.67	▲	1.33	-8.12
Hang Seng	22,323.91	22,280.53	-43.38	▼	-0.19	1.67
Straits Times	2,797.55	2,793.99	-3.56	▼	-0.13	-3.08

MENA Stock Indices						
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %	
Kuwait	5,491.30	5,495.63	4.33	▲	0.08	-2.25
Saudi Arabia	6,492.86	6,644.92	152.06	▲	2.34	-6.06
Dubai	3,196.62	3,262.82	66.20	▲	2.07	1.45
Abu Dhabi	4,180.83	4,290.44	109.61	▲	2.62	-2.94
Bahrain	1,161.25	1,168.24	6.99	▲	0.60	-4.49
Qatar	9,679.92	9,741.71	61.79	▲	0.64	-7.19
Oman	5,481.97	5,493.82	11.85	▲	0.22	1.40
Lebanon	1,207.90	1,216.33	8.43	▲	0.70	3.28
Jordan	2,148.05	2,142.94	-5.11	▼	-0.24	0.55
Egypt	10,640.53	10,948.02	307.49	▲	2.89	51.88
Morocco	10,602.80	10,617.17	14.37	▲	0.14	18.79
Tunisia	5,563.47	5,565.77	2.30	▲	0.04	10.34

Global Currencies Exchange Rate								
Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.2169	3.2712	3.0552	2.6281	3.2823	358.46	4.3627
Saudi Riyal	0.08185		0.2678	0.2501	0.2151	0.2687	29.34	0.3571
US Dollar	0.30570	3.7347		0.9340	0.8034	1.0034	109.58	1.3337
Euro	0.32731	3.9987	1.0707		0.8605	1.0746	117.38	1.4294
Sterling Pound	0.38050	4.6486	1.2447	1.1621		1.2490	136.45	1.6615
Swiss Franc	0.30466	3.7220	0.9966	0.9306	0.8006		109.28	1.3292
Japanese Yen	0.00279	0.0341	0.0091	0.0085	0.0073	0.0092		0.0122
Australian Dollar	0.22921	2.8003	0.7498	0.6996	0.6019	0.7523	82.16	

MENA Currencies Exchange Rate								
Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dollar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30570	3.7347	0.3740	3.6263	0.3831	3.6580	15.6400
Kuwait Dinar	3.2712		12.2169	1.2235	11.8623	1.2532	11.9660	51.1613
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08185		0.1001	0.9710	0.1026	0.9795	4.1878
Bahraini Dinar	2.6737	0.81734	9.9853		9.6955	1.0243	9.7802	41.8159
Qatari Riyal	0.2758	0.08430	1.0299	0.1031		0.1056	1.0087	4.3129
Omani Riyal	2.6102	0.79794	9.7484	0.9763	9.4654		9.5482	40.8238
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08357	1.0210	0.1022	0.9913	0.1047		4.2756
Egyptian Pound	0.0639	0.01955	0.2388	0.0239	0.2319	0.0245	0.2339	

Global Interest Rates					
Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	0.00	1.19	1.44	1.63	1.94
US Dollar	0.45	0.55	0.90	1.27	1.60
Euro	-0.39	-0.37	-0.33	-0.21	-0.07
Sterling Pound	0.24	0.26	0.39	0.56	0.81
Swiss Franc	-0.78	-0.78	-0.73	-0.66	-0.48
Australian Dollar	1.59	1.67	1.63	1.62	1.62
Japanese Yen	-0.04	-0.05	-0.06	0.00	0.11

Global Bond Yields				
Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year
United States	1.01	1.71	2.27	2.99
Europe	-0.64	-0.32	0.33	0.96
United Kingdom	0.20	0.67	1.42	2.05

Commodities						
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %	
Kuwait Oil	40.83	41.65	0.82	▲	2.01	29.59
Brent	43.31	43.73	0.42	▲	0.97	13.21
West Texas	45.91	45.81	-0.10	▼	-0.22	19.12
Gold	1227.98	1225.76	-2.22	▼	-0.18	13.57
Silver	17.08	16.98	-0.10	▼	-0.58	18.91

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.820
Indian Rupees	4.540
Pakistani Rupees	2.914
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.066
Nepali Rupees	2.840
Singapore Dollar	216.670
Hongkong Dollar	39.302
Bangladesh Taka	3.872
Philippine Peso	6.208
Thai Baht	8.667

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.348
Qatari Riyal	83.785
UAE Dirham	792.230
Bahraini Dinar	810.020
UAE Dirham	83.043

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	22.900
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	19.394
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.224
Tunisian Dinar	135.490
Jordanian Dinar	429.640
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.032
Syrian Lira	2.174
Morocco Dirham	31.267

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	304.850
Euro	329.540
Sterling Pound	382.590
Canadian dollar	226.150
Turkish lira	93.370

Swiss Franc	307.460
Australian Dollar	232.300
US Dollar Buying	303.650

GOLD	
20 Gram	248.45
10 Gram	127.14
5 Gram	64.42

### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.200
Canadian Dolla	225.044
Sterling Pound	383.455
Euro	329.642
Swiss Frank	301.458
Bahrain Dinar	805.769
UAE Dirhams	83.216
Qatari Riyals	84.433
Saudi Riyals	82.003
Jordanian Dinar	429.495
Egyptian Pound	19.620
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.065
Indian Rupees	4.498
Pakistani Rupees	2.902
Bangladesh Taka	3.875
Philippines Peso	6.189
Cyprus pound	160.643
Japanese Yen	3.826
Syrian Pound	2.427
Nepalese Rupees	3.860
Malaysian Ringgit	72.482
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.243
Thai Bhat	9.664
Turkish Lira	94.850

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.373219	0.383219
Czech Korune	0.004089	0.016089
Danish Krone	0.039921	0.044921
Euro	0.321970	0.330970
Norwegian Krone	0.032112	0.037312
Romanian Leu	0.072413	0.072413
Slovakia	0.009127	0.019127
Swedish Krona	0.029192	0.034192
Swiss Franc	0.298270	0.309270
Turkish Lira	0.089892	0.100192
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.221747	0.233747
New Zealand Dollar	0.209870	0.219370
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.221532	0.230532
Georgina Lari	0.137755	0.137755
US Dollars	0.300900	0.305600
US Dollars Mint	0.301400	0.305600
<b>Asia</b>		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003395	0.003979
Chinese Yuan	0.043184	0.046684
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037228	0.039978
Indian Rupee	0.000078	0.004197
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000019	0.000025

Japanese Yen	0.002710	0.002890
Kenyan Shilling	0.002988	0.002988
Korean Won	0.000251	0.000266
Malaysian Ringgit	0.067265	0.073265
Nepalese Rupee	0.002831	0.003001
Pakistan Rupee	0.002707	0.002997
Philippine Peso	0.006114	0.006414
Sierra Leone	0.000051	0.000057
Singapore Dollar	0.210114	0.220114
South African Rand	0.015498	0.023996
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001643	0.002223
Taiwan	0.009481	0.009661
Thai Baht	0.008288	0.008838
<b>Arab</b>		
Bahraini Dinar	0.802448	0.810948
Egyptian Pound	0.015564	0.024817
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000187	0.000247
Jordanian Dinar	0.426041	0.435041
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020032	0.044032
Nigerian Naira	0.000399	0.001034
Omani Riyal	0.785787	0.791467
Qatar Riyal	0.082964	0.084414
Saudi Riyal	0.080247	0.081547
Syrian Pound	0.001293	0.001513
Tunisian Dinar	0.130848	0.138848
Turkish Lira	0.089892	0.100192
UAE Dirhams	0.081616	0.083316



## HEDGE FUNDS TURN BEARISH ON OIL AT RECORD RATE

**LONDON:** Hedge funds turned bearish towards oil prices at the fastest rate on record in the first week of November amid growing doubts about whether OPEC will reach a successful deal to curb its growing production. Hedge funds and other money managers cut their net long position in Brent and West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures and options by 149 million barrels in the week ending Nov 8.

The weekly reduction in net long positions was the largest on record, according to an analysis of data published by regulators and exchanges. The sell-off in crude prices, which has been under way for three weeks, was initially led by the liquidation of stale long positions, but the most recent week saw the emergence of a heavy wave of fresh short-selling. Hedge funds increased their short positions across the three main crude contracts by 135 million barrels in the seven days to Nov. 8, while long

positions were cut by 13 million barrels.

### Fifth cycle

Hedge funds' short positions in the flagship NYMEX WTI contract increased by 83 million barrels. This is the fifth time since the start of 2015 that hedge funds have accumulated a very large short position in NYMEX WTI. Each time the hedge funds have amassed a large short position oil prices have fallen, only to rise again when the shorts are closed out. The cycles of short-selling and the rise and fall in oil prices have been closely synchronized and had a strongly predictable component. But the cycles have become faster and deeper as more momentum-driven hedge funds trade the cyclical behavior. The entire short-selling cycle is accelerating.

The current cycle has been the most aggressive so far with short positions established at the fastest

rate on record. Hedge funds accumulated an extra 89 million barrels of short positions in NYMEX WTI in just a fortnight. The total short position in NYMEX WTI on Nov 8 at 145 million barrels was still well below the maximum short position recorded on Aug 9 of 220 million barrels. But it is likely further short positions have been added since Nov 8 as crude prices continued to trend lower. With long positions sharply reduced from their recent peak and short positions increased, the balance of risks has shifted to the upside.

### Risks shift

Oil traders and hedge funds are betting the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries will fail to reach a production deal at its next ministerial meeting at the end of November, or that any deal will be weak and lack credibility. Similar scepti-

cism was expressed before the last OPEC meeting in September. The establishment of large short positions left the market vulnerable to a short squeeze when a surprise deal was announced.

The renewed wave of short-selling and fall in oil prices will intensify pressure on OPEC oil ministers to reach a deal before the end of the month or risk triggering an even deeper sell-off. Policymakers from OPEC countries have launched an intensified round of shuttle diplomacy in recent days in response to the increased stakes. The outlook for oil prices is not a one-way bet from here given how many short positions have already been established. Even without OPEC, the large short positions run by hedge funds have left the market poised to rally if and when prices stop falling and bearish managers lock in profits by buying back some shorts. — Reuters

## News

in brief

### UK real estate giants fall into red on Brexit

**LONDON:** Real estate giants British Land and Land Securities sank into the red in the first half of 2016, partly hit by sliding commercial property prices after the shock Brexit vote. British Land said yesterday that it suffered a pre-tax loss of £205 million (\$255 million, 238 million euros) in the six months to September after a year-earlier profit of £823 million. The firm, one of Europe's largest publicly listed real estate companies, said the loss was "primarily due to a negative property valuation movement" in the wake of Britain's EU exit referendum on June 23. "Uncertainty caused by the UK's vote to leave the European Union has resulted in the central London office market registering its first capital value declines since 2009 following several years of strong growth in both rents and values," it said. "We recognize the impact that this uncertainty is having on businesses in London, and their ability to make plans for the future, but we believe that London will endure as a global centre."

### Bahrain approaches banks about sukuk sale in the Q1

**DUBAI:** The Kingdom of Bahrain is in talks with lenders for an Islamic bond, or sukuk, which is expected to be issued in the first quarter of 2017, banking sources said. No banks have been appointed yet to arrange the debt transaction, the bankers said on condition of anonymity because the information has not been made public. The size of the debt issuance will be a minimum of \$500 million, one of the banking sources said. Bahrain's Ministry of Finance was not available for immediate comment. The Kingdom has some \$5 billion-equivalent in debt maturing in 2017, mostly consisting of short-term local currency treasury bills. It has no US dollar bond expiring next year, Thomson Reuters data shows. Bahrain's latest US dollar debt issuance was in October, when it sold a \$2 billion bond comprising a \$1 billion sukuk and a \$1 billion conventional bond. The \$1 billion long seven-year sukuk, maturing in February 2024, carries a 5.625 percent coupon rate, while the conventional bond, with a 12-year maturity period, was issued with a 7 percent interest rate.

### Doha Bank picks banks for conventional bond issue

**DUBAI:** Doha Bank, Qatar's fifth-largest lender by assets, has picked banks for a conventional bond issue, banking sources said yesterday. One of the sources said the issue would be in the region of \$300 million to \$400 million and that the issue was planned for the first quarter of 2017. The bank was not immediately available to comment. Several other Gulf banks are planning issues as investor uncertainty eases in the wake of Donald Trump's election as US president. Bahrain-based Gulf International Bank has asked banks to submit proposals to arrange a potential US dollar-denominated bond issue, while Bank of Sharjah is considering issuing a \$500 million conventional bond in 2017 for general corporate purposes, banking sources told Reuters on Monday. The sources declined to say which banks Doha Bank had mandated to arrange its issue. The bank received approval earlier this year to raise funds with up to \$5 billion worth of short-term instruments, including \$3 billion through certificates of deposits and euro commercial paper worth \$2 billion.

# OIL WARS: HOW KREMLIN \$13 BN INDIAN DEAL ALMOST FELL APART

## GLOBAL RIVALRY BETWEEN RUSSIA AND SAUDI INTENSIFIES

**LONDON:** A multi-billion-dollar Russian deal to buy Indian refiner Essar was nearly sunk at the eleventh hour by a rival bid from Saudi Arabia as the two oil superpowers vie for supremacy across the world. The deal between Essar and a consortium led by Kremlin oil giant Rosneft appeared dead in the water two months ago after Saudi state energy firm Aramco weighed in, according to seven Russia, India and Saudi-based industry sources familiar with or involved in the negotiations.

It was salvaged due to the involvement of Russian President Vladimir Putin and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who were keen for it to go through, and after the consortium agreed to pay \$13 billion - more than double what Rosneft had initially valued Essar at, sources said. This made the refiner the biggest-ever foreign acquisition in India and Russia's largest outbound deal.

The tussle for Essar - a state-of-the-art plant in the world's fastest-growing fuel market - illustrates the growing battle for oil markets between Russia and Saudi Arabia, the world's two largest crude exporters. It also sheds light on the challenges OPEC member Saudi Arabia and non-OPEC Russia - which are also fighting a proxy conflict in Syria's civil war - will face in trying to clinch a global agreement to limit output growth to prop up oil prices. The full details of how the Essar deal was struck remain unclear. Two industry sources said it was rescued thanks to the involvement of Putin and Modi while three other sources said Rosneft had simply outbid Saudi Aramco.

Officials in Modi's office declined to comment while Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov denied there was any Kremlin intervention in the deal. "Naturally, we defend the interests of our companies. Of course we lobby for them, especially on such large deals," said Peskov, but added that in the case of Essar "there were no orders from the Kremlin." "It was a corporate decision by Rosneft to gain synergies via cooperation with India," he said. Rosneft and Saudi Aramco declined to comment. Essar said it had held discussions with several potential buyers but had gone with the Rosneft consortium because their offer was considered the most attractive. It denied there was any intervention from Putin or Modi.

### Showdown

Rosneft boss Igor Sechin is keen to buy refining assets around the world to guarantee outlets for Russian oil. He had been negotiating since 2014 to buy 49 percent of Essar from its owners, Indian brothers Ravi and Shashi Ruia, and the two parties had been in exclusive talks since July 2015 when a preliminary deal was signed. While



**ZELIENOPLE:** A crew works on a gas drilling rig at a well site for shale based natural gas in Zelienople, Pa. — AP

the exact amount Rosneft was prepared to offer for the stake at that stage is unclear, Russian and Indian industry sources said it valued the whole of Essar at about \$5.7 billion.

However it became apparent that there were problems with the deal in early September, when Sechin travelled to India to meet the Ruia brothers, flying from Hangzhou, China, where he had been part of Putin's G20 summit delegation. Sechin walked into the meeting with the Ruia brothers soon after landing in India at 1 a.m., determined to close the deal, according to sources briefed on the discussions.

As the meeting started, one of the brothers told Sechin the deal process had been going on for too long, the exclusivity period had expired in July and Essar was now talking to other parties. Those other parties included Saudi Aramco, he said. According to the sources familiar with how the meeting unfolded, Sechin responded by saying that if Essar walked away from the deal it risked losing Russian financial and oil-supply support. The Ruia brothers then said the talks with Rosneft were over and called an abrupt end to the meeting.

"People started leaving the room, embarrassed," one of the sources said. Another source said the Essar management had drafted a statement to say the deal with Rosneft was off. Rosneft and Essar declined to comment on what transpired at the meeting, or on whether such a statement had existed. Sechin and the Ruia brothers could not be reached for comment. Three Saudi-based sources familiar with details of talks between Essar and Saudi Aramco said the firm was seriously considering buying Essar. One of the sources said Aramco was prepared to pay up to \$9 billion for all or most of the refiner. Aramco declined to comment on whether it had made a bid.

### Too big to fail

In the end, however, the Rosneft-Essar deal proved to be too big to fail. For India, a deal collapse or a delay because of talks with another party would set back Modi's drive to clean up India's \$140 billion mountain of bad debt given Essar's multi-billion-dollar debts to local and foreign banks after years of rapid expansion. For Russia, the deal in the huge Indian market represented

an important milestone in building a global oil empire despite Western sanctions imposed on Russia over its actions in Ukraine. Facing the Saudi competition, Rosneft formed a consortium that bought 98 percent of the refiner plus a fuel terminal for \$13 billion. The Kremlin oil firm bought 49 percent - below the 50 percent level that would have fallen foul of Western sanctions - with Swiss trading house Trafigura and Russian private investment group UCP buying the other 49 percent.

According to the Indian and Russian industry sources, Rosneft and Essar returned to the negotiating table within days of the spat in early September, and the deal was finally struck. One of the sources said there was a fierce battle between Essar and Rosneft over the terms. They said the Russian-led consortium was forced to outbid the Saudi offer, which they said comprised a combination of cash, long-term low interest credit and oil supplies. Trafigura declined to comment on how the deal came together, while UCP did not reply to a written request asking for comment. Washington said the deal did not violate sanctions. — Reuters

## EVEN SHORT OF EXTREMES, TRUMP PROTECTIONISM 'STILL DAMAGING'

**WASHINGTON:** While his advisors have played down some of President-elect Donald Trump's most extreme trade threats as negotiating tactics, economists remain worried about the potential to inflict real damage. The Republican billionaire has said that on his first day he will label China a currency manipulator, has threatened to pull out of free trade agreements like NAFTA and slap punitive tariffs of up to 45 percent on China and Mexico.

And there is no question the US president has the power to take those actions unilaterally, without the con-

sent of Congress, economists say. In a campaign season drenched in hyperbolic rhetoric, those protectionist threats have pushed economists to issue truly apocalyptic projections, warning of job losses of four million or more, and a deep and damaging recession in 2018, with negative spillovers to the global economy.

### Using threats to negotiate

Since his surprise election win November 8, Trump's advisors have suggested his threats were designed simply to push trading partners to

agree to a better deal for the US. Even so, economists say Trump's stance already has done damage, although it is hard to quantify what might happen until he provides specifics. The Trans-Pacific Partnership, which comprised 12 economies and would have been the biggest US trade deal, is widely considered dead following Trump's election.

US Trade Representative Michael Froman said the deal "is in purgatory." "We've seen a rise of populism, not just in this country... politics that did not always permit a full debate on the facts," he said at a forum late Monday. It could be that Trump's threats have worked to some extent, since Canada and Mexico each announced last week that they are willing to sit down with the new administration to reexamine NAFTA. But not factored in to the Trump team calculation is the reaction of US trading partners to Trump's protectionist policies.

Marcus Noland, executive vice president of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, points out about US trading partners: "They've got complaints too" about NAFTA. Under the rules of the US free trade agreements like NAFTA, the president can pull out simply by notifying the other members. Notification triggers a 180-day clock for new negotiations, but absent a new agreement-which must be ratified by all member legislatures-the accord would disappear. — AFP

## BARRATT CUTS THE PRICE OF ITS EXPENSIVE LONDON HOMES

### HOUSE PRICES A DIVISIVE ISSUE FOR BRITONS

**LONDON:** Britain's biggest house-builder Barratt said it was cutting the price of some of its most expensive London homes by up to 10 percent in the latest sign that the market has cooled after property tax increases and the Brexit vote. After an initial dip following the June 23 referendum, demand for new homes in most of Britain, including outer London, has bounced back according to builders and surveys, but it remains weak in the capital's wealthiest central areas.

The Brexit vote followed an increase in property tax on buy-to-let and second homes which particularly affected central London. Some prospective buyers are investors seeking a rental income and have bought cheaper homes instead or pushed for price cuts to offset higher taxes. "We do recognize that at price points above 600,000 pounds (\$750,000), particularly at price points once you move above 1 million, the (London) market is clearly slower," Barratt CEO David Thomas told Reuters.

"You are seeing commentary about prices backing off year-on-year on a 5 to 10 percent basis so I think that it's in that sort of order," he added. The vote to leave the EU will contribute to a 9 percent fall in prices in prime central London, which



**CANNES:** People visit the International Market for Retail Real Estate (MAPIC) yesterday in Cannes, southeastern France. The event is held until November 18, gathers thousands of retailers, investors, local and regional authorities, and retail property professionals from around the world. — AFP

includes mansions and luxury apartments in Knightsbridge, Notting Hill and Chelsea, according to estate agents Savills. Thomas attributed the softening London market to more homes coming to market and the increase in stamp duty, property tax, rather than the EU vote.

### Priced out

House prices are key to consumer confidence in Britain, where many gauge the strength of the economy by rises in the value of their most valu-

able asset. However, complaints about the affordability of homes have risen to the top of the political agenda. The average price of houses in Britain is around 220,000 pounds, with many struggling to buy, particularly in the capital where prices are much higher. While Britain's largest housebuilders have reported strong growth in recent months, there have been mixed signs on the progress of Britain's commercial property market, which was first to be hit by Brexit as investors pulled cash from funds. — Reuters



**SHANGHAI:** A farmer operates a reaper as he harvests rice in Moangang village, located on the outskirts of Shanghai. — AFP



# TRUMP-FUELLED RISK RALLY SHIFTS TO JAPANESE BONDS, EURO STOCKS RESUME UPSWING; DOLLAR INDEX HITS 1-YEAR HIGH

**LONDON:** Investors resumed the post-US election trade of selling bonds and buying stocks yesterday after a pause earlier this week, albeit less aggressively, with Japan's 10-year bond yield hitting its highest since February. The dollar was in demand again too, rising to a one-year-high against a basket of currencies as the euro hit a nine-month low of \$1.07, and to an eight-year peak against the China's yuan. US President-elect Trump's plans to cut taxes and boost infrastructure spending would boost economic activity while his proposals to deport illegal immigrants and impose tariffs on cheap imports are seen driving inflation higher. That prospect has given rise to expectations that US interest rates will rise faster than previously anticipated, boosting the dollar.

As the Bank for International Settlements warned on Tuesday, a stronger dollar poses risks for global markets. But for now, investors are enjoying the ride, meaning stocks and the dollar are in favor at the expense of bonds. "With 10-year Japanese yields briefly edging back above zero, the market will at some stage focus on whether the Bank of Japan will defend the zero level, especially if the global yield sell-off gathers pace over the coming weeks and months," Deutsche Bank's Jim Reid said in a note yesterday. The BOJ announced in September it

would cap the benchmark 10-year yield at zero as part of its long-standing battle against deflation and anaemic growth.

"It would be a strange decision to abandon the new policy so soon after announcing it, so assuming global yields remain elevated they may be forced to buy more (bonds) than they thought when the new scheme was announced," Reid said. Japan's 10-year yield rose to 0.03 percent, a nine-month high. Comparable US Treasury yields rose 3 basis points to 2.27 percent, edging back up toward Monday's 11-month high of 2.302 percent and up from around 1.86 percent before the election. US interest rate futures are pricing in an 85 percent chance of a rate hike in December, compared to 75 percent before the election.

## Dollar rises again

In currency market trading yesterday, the dollar rose 0.3 percent against the yen to a five-month high of 109.62 yen and a one-year high of 100.32 on an index basis. Sharp gains in US bond yields have drawn investors to the dollar, and the dollar index is just 0.5 percent away from its highest level in more than 13-1/2 years. The yuan weakened to 6.8703 to the dollar, its lowest level since December 2008. "The narrative on the dollar is strong," said Simon Smith, chief economist at FXPro. "A move higher in inter-



**TOKYO:** People walk past an electronic stock indicator of a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. Asian stock markets were mostly higher yesterday, tracking overnight gains on Wall Street, as investors awaited more policy details from US president-elect Donald Trump. —AP

est rates next month is now a near dead cert, with the implied path for rates next year also moving higher and providing further sup-

port for the dollar." In equities, the FTSEuroFirst index of leading 300 European shares followed Wall Street's lead from the

previous day and was up 0.2 percent, underpinned by commodity-related stocks.

A 5 percent fall in Bayer, however, weighed on Germany's DAX, which fell 0.2 percent. The drugmaker fell after a placement of 4 billion euros of mandatory convertible notes. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan rose 0.2 percent, bouncing back from a four-month low touched earlier this week, while the yen's slide toward 110 per dollar helped lift Japan's Nikkei by 1.1 percent.

The dollar's strength has fanned fears investors could shift funds to the United States from emerging markets. Emerging market stocks, which had fallen 7 percent in the four sessions to Monday, also extended gains for a second day yesterday.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 0.29 percent to a record closing high while the S&P 500 gained 0.75 percent. Since Trump's unexpected victory last week, US shares have rallied while US bond prices tumbled, pushing up their yields sharply. In commodities gold was steady at \$1,228 per ounce, not far from a 5 1/2-month low of \$1,211.8 seen on Monday, while an oil industry report that showed an unexpected build in US crude stocks helped take this week's shine off oil prices. Brent futures, the global benchmark, fell 0.8 percent to \$46.55 per barrel. —Reuters

# FINLAND PINING FOR THE POST-NOKIA CHAMPION

**AANEKOSKI:** Nokia was once the motor of Finland's economy, but since the demise of the company's mobile phone business the Nordic country has struggled to find a new engine for growth. But after nine sluggish years and a three-year recession that ended in 2015, could Finland's centuries-old, if unglamorous, forestry sector, hold the answer? A rare bit of good economic news came out of the small industrial town of Aaneikoski when forestry giant Metsa Group announced last year a record investment of 1.2 billion euros (\$1.31 billion) in a new facility.

A gust of wind spreads the unpleasant odour of sulphur-akin to rotten eggs-across the town in central Finland, a regular reminder to the 20,000 residents of the quest for new riches. A new mill and biorefinery that will more than double the town's annual production of pulp-a wood fibre mass used to make paper and cardboard-is under construction.

Locals do not seem bothered by the stench. "It's just money that smells," 50-year-old Petteri Heimonen, a local IT technician, told AFP on a recent visit. The forestry industry's main products, paper and cardboard reclaimed the top spot as the country's main export in 2015, followed by other heavy industry products: diesel fuels and stainless steel. But it is not the new high-tech miracle Finns have been hoping for since the country's only globally well-known consumer product, Nokia's mobile phones, disappeared from the scene after failing to catch up with the rapid rise in smartphones.

## High-tech hopes

Analyst Tomi Amberla of Poyry Management Consulting believes the forestry's number one spot says a lot about the dire state of business in Finland's post-Nokia era. It shows "that other sectors have been in trouble... There is small growth in forestry's export income and quantities, but it's quite flat, meaning others have declined," he said. Amberla stressed that Finland has diversified economic growth with high-tech consumer products and service exports.



**AANEKOSKI, Finland:** The new mill and biorefinery expected to be finished in the third quarter of 2017 are pictured at Metsa Fibre's new pulp and bioproduct mill in Aaneikoski, central Finland. Nokia's mobile phones were once the jewel in the Finnish economy's crown, but after their stunning demise, the Nordic country has turned its sights back to its green gold: forestry. —AFP

High hopes have been cast for instance on Finland's games industry, led by Clash of Clans creator Supercell and Angry Birds inventor Rovio. But this industry's combined net revenue last year equalled just a little over four percent of Nokia's revenue of 51 billion euros at its peak in 2007, when it was the world's number one handset maker. It is unlikely that the forestry sector can compete with Nokia's figures, even though many companies are also multinational.

In 2015, the sector registered only 44 percent of Nokia's peak revenue in 2007, when measured at comparable prices. The global financial crisis that began in 2007 hit Finland's export-driven economy hard and the forestry sector was particularly affected, posting a 10-percent drop in production in 2008. The industry's main product, fine paper, took a hit from both the global economic slowdown and from the rapid shift in media con-

sumption from paper to online articles. "Five to 10 years ago forestry was considered a sunset industry," manager Riikka Pakarinen of the Finnish Forest Industries Federation acknowledged.

## Biodiesel to fuel growth

By 2015, Finnish paper giants UPM-Kymmene, Stora Enso and Metsa Group had shut more than 30 paper-making machines around the country, most of them located in small towns highly dependent on the companies for jobs and tax revenue. But with forests covering 78 percent of Finland's land surface, they are unquestionably one of the country's most important resources. Metsa Group is not alone in hoping trees can mean new growth in two senses. Another group, Finnulp, plans to build a new pulp and biorefinery in the eastern town of Kuopio, while Chinese Sunshine Kaidi New Energy Group plans to invest a billion euros in a refinery

making renewable diesel from wood materials in the northern Finnish town of Kemi.

Finland's leading forestry giant UPM is already in the business. Last year in the southeastern town of Lappeenranta it launched a biorefinery that turns resin, a side product from making pulp, into diesel. "It's the world's first facility to produce wood-based diesel," UPM's head of biofuels Sari Mannonen said. She anticipates growth especially in western Europe, where the EU's climate targets urge replacing fossil fuels with new green options. Analyst Amberla said forestry investments are grounded as global demand for pulp is rising, driven by increasing urbanization and a growing middle class, especially in Asia. But there is a limit to just how much forestry can do: Finland's Natural Resources Institute estimated the harvested share of forests amounted to 79 percent of their annual growth in 2014. —AFP

# GOLD SLIPS AS DOLLAR INDEX CLIMBS TO 11-MONTH HIGH

**LONDON:** Gold eased yesterday in line with a firmer dollar, but found support around \$1,225 an ounce as a sharp rally in cyclical assets like stocks and copper following Donald Trump's election to the US presidency ran out of steam. The metal has shed more than \$100 an ounce from last Wednesday's post-election high on the back of a surge in bond yields and sharply higher appetite for risk. Spot gold was down 0.1 percent at \$1,226.20 an ounce at 1035 GMT, while US gold futures for December delivery were up \$1.40 an ounce at \$1,225.90.

The dollar inched up to a fresh 11-month high versus a currency basket yesterday, though major banks sounded slightly more divided on its immediate prospects after a week-long rally driven by the post-election surge in US bond yields. "The most important thing that we saw for gold (after the election) was that the dollar appreciated," LBBW analyst Thorsten Proettel said. "Also, yields on 10-year Treasuries went up 50 basis points, which is poison for gold, as a non-interest bearing asset." "It seems there is something of a bottom around \$1,225," he said. Trump's election to the US presidency sent bond yields surging to 2016 highs this week, pushing the US dollar sharply higher, as investors bet his administration's policies

would stoke inflation.

Stock markets stabilized yesterday, with European stocks little changed after rallying more than 3 percent over the past week from their post-election lows. Prices of industrial commodities like copper and crude oil also retreated. Gold is also expected to also be feeling the pressure from an imminent hike in US interest rates, which are tipped to rise for only the second time in nearly a decade next month. Investor appetite for gold remained slack, with the world's largest gold-backed exchange-traded fund, SPDR Gold Shares, saying its holdings fell another 1.5 tons on Tuesday to a 4-1/2 month low of 927.45 tons.

"ETF holdings have been reduced by over 50 tons since the result of the US presidential election was announced last Wednesday," Commerzbank said in a note. In the major physical markets, some Indian gold traders are placing bulk short-term import orders on fears that Prime Minister Narendra Modi might soon add curbs on overseas purchases of the metal to his withdrawal of high-denomination banknotes in his fight against 'black money'. Silver was down 0.7 percent at \$16.96 an ounce, and platinum was 0.8 percent lower at \$928.20. Palladium was down 1.3 percent at \$696.60. —Reuters

# OIL DECLINES AFTER AN OPEC-INSPIRED RALLY

**LONDON:** Oil prices fell yesterday, returning some of the gains made in one of the year's biggest rallies a day earlier, after industry data showed US crude stocks rose beyond expectations last week to add to an oversupplied market. Global benchmark Brent crude was down 39 cents at \$46.56 a barrel at 0917 GMT. It closed Tuesday 5.7 percent higher on news that members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries would renew efforts to limit production.

US crude was 47 cents lower at \$45.34 a barrel. "Prices are down on the build in US crude oil stocks reported by the API last night," said Tamas Varga, oil analyst at London brokerage PVM Oil Associates. Weekly US crude oil stocks surged by 3.6 million barrels last week, the American Petroleum Institute (API) industry group said, exceeding analyst expectations of a 1.5-million-barrel rise. The news dampened

a rally infused by news that OPEC members were meeting ahead of an official group gathering on Nov. 30 to build consensus for a deal to limit production, and by oil pipeline attacks by militants in Nigeria.

A number of energy ministers from OPEC countries are likely to meet informally in Doha on Friday to try to build consensus over decisions taken by the full group in September in Algiers, an Algerian energy source said. "We estimate the possibility of an actual OPEC production cut as 50-50," said Hans van Cleef, senior energy economist at ABN Amro. "If OPEC would stick to its intention to set its production ceiling at 32.5 million barrels a day, or even lower, market optimism will likely pick up, which could be supportive for oil prices." The Dutch bank lowered its oil price forecasts yesterday, expecting Brent and US crude to average \$50 a barrel in the fourth quarter. —Reuters



**TOKYO:** The logo of Japanese gaming giant Nintendo and its game character Super Mario is being displayed at a showroom in Tokyo. —AFP

# NINTENDO SHARES JUMP ON SUPER MARIO APP

**TOKYO:** Shares in gaming giant Nintendo jumped more than five percent yesterday after details of the launch for its keenly awaited new Super Mario game for iPhones were released, hot on the heels of the Pokemon craze. Kyoto-based Nintendo said it would release Super Mario Run worldwide for Apple's iPhone and iPad through the App Store on December 15. The firm's stock price soared as much as 5.5 percent at one point before easing slightly to close up 2.77 percent at 25,550 yen on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. Super Mario, which dates to 1985, is one of Nintendo's best-known and most instantly recognisable brands.

It is so associated with Japan that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in August appeared at the Rio Olympics' closing ceremony in the mustachioed plumber's red hat and blue overalls to promote Tokyo's 2020 Games. The full app would cost \$9.99 in the United States and 1,200 yen (\$10.95) in Japan, although limited elements of the game would be available for free. Nintendo's shares more than doubled in July-making it more valuable than Sony at one point-as its Pokemon Go game explod-

ed into the public consciousness, being downloaded half a billion times. However, because the firm did not own the licence to the game-that is owned by San Francisco-based Niantic-its success had little impact on the firm's bottom line. But while its share price has dipped back slightly over the past few months, it is still up two-thirds from lows seen before the emergence of Pokemon Go.

## 'Can't wait'

Neil Campling, an analyst at Northern Trust Capital Markets, hailed the company's approach of enticing gamers in the same way as other mobile game successes as "a great strategy". "To set a low incentive and then a low total cost when engaged could set Nintendo on a differentiated path, which ultimately could be a game changer," Campling said. The game will be introduced for Android-based devices at a later date. Social media reaction in Japan to the game's price was positive. "Once you pay 1,200 yen, you don't have to pay extra money," one fan said on Twitter. "That's cheap. Can't wait."

Nintendo has already said that any potential earnings impact from Super Mario Run has already been factored into its forecast for the present fiscal year. Nintendo warned last month that its operating profit would come in at 30 billion yen for the financial year, about one-third less than an earlier forecast, while sales would also be lower than expected. After years of refusing to move into the smartphone sector, Nintendo-which also created the Donkey Kong and Legend of Zelda brands-announced last year it was teaming up with Japanese mobile specialist DeNA to develop games for the handsets based on its host of popular characters.

And in March, the company released its first mobile game "MiiTomo"-a free-to-play and interactive game that allows users to create avatars-as it tries to compete in an industry that has increasingly moved online. However, it remains committed to its console business and last Thursday launched a palm-sized version of its 1980s-era games console the Famicom, while it also plans to unveil another device early next year. —AFP



# BMW EXPANDS REACHNOW MOBILE SERVICES

**LOS ANGELES:** German automaker BMW announced Tuesday in Los Angeles that it is expanding its ReachNow program with new mobile tools and adding a city location: New York's trendy Brooklyn borough. BMW ReachNow, launched in Seattle, Washington state in April, is adding services to its initial offering, the chief executive of the new program Steve Banfield said at a news conference on the first day of AutoMobility, a car show focused on

mobile technologies.

Among the new services offered on the ReachNow app is a car-sharing service, rivaling Uber and Lyft, that allows a person to hail a ride and personalize it by selecting temperature, music or even a "do not disturb" feature. It will launch in test mode in Seattle on December 8 before being tested in other cities. ReachNow also is expanding its shared car rental service, similar to Zipcar and launched in April that

until now was available only in Seattle and Portland, Oregon with 800 BMWs.

That service for the first time will leave the West Coast and head east, to Brooklyn, where 250 BMWs and Minis will be waiting for customers. In Manhattan, a pilot program for residential buildings will give residents access to a fleet of electric BMW i3 or BMW Series 3 vehicles that will remain onsite for their exclusive leasing. ReachNow also will allow longer-term car rentals of

two to five days with members able to schedule a vehicle to be delivered at their preferred time and location. This reserve service will begin in Seattle in early 2017.

Another pilot program for owners of MINI 2016 or 2017 model year vehicles will be launched in Seattle. The Share program enables MINI owners to rent their vehicles when they do not need access to it, helping to offset the cost of car ownership. The Share service faces competition from other

companies such as Turo or Car2go. BMW and other big automakers like General Motors, Ford and Mercedes are racing ahead to develop full suites of mobile technologies. AutoMobility LA is being held through Thursday at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The event combines the former Connected Car Expo and the press days of the LA auto show. The 10-day public show opens Friday and will feature 1,000 vehicles, including 50 new models. —AFP



**GENEVA:** A picture taken shows a model displaying a pair of diamond earrings called 'Miroir de l'Amour' created from two D-color, flawless pear-shaped diamonds of 52,55 and 50,47 carats during a press preview at Christie's auction house in Geneva. —AFP

## ULTRA-RICH BID FOR ALL THAT GLITTERS AT SWISS AUCTIONS

**GENEVA:** Geneva's autumn jewel auctions got underway Tuesday, with Russian oligarchs and Chinese billionaires among those eyeing up the array of eye-wateringly expensive bling on offer. The Swiss city's twice-annual sales of rare jewels are often dominated by stones the size of door-stoppers. But this week, gems valued by their weight in carats will share centre stage with gems enriched by the weight of history-including Russian diamonds that reputedly helped broker peace between warring empires three centuries ago.

Christie's kicked off the sales at the luxury Four Seasons Hotel des Bergues on Lake Geneva, with an anonymous telephone bidder snapping up the most closely-watched item—a pair of Boehmer and Bassenge earrings—for a cool \$17.61 million (16.42 million euros) including commission. Tobias Kormind, head of the 77 Diamonds firm that tracks the global diamond market, said elite collectors are more attracted to loose stones rather than show-stoppers like the earrings, composed of two flawless white diamonds weighing 52.55 carats and 50.47 carats.

"These earrings are far more likely to be a gift for someone to wear for special occasions," he said ahead of the sale, noting that the list of people interested in socializing with more than 100 carats worth of diamonds on their ears is limited. The earrings fell a little short of the expected price, valued by Christie's at \$20-\$30 million. A necklace made of three huge diamonds by the same jeweller went under the hammer for \$8.06 million.

### 'Peace-making' diamonds

Rival Sotheby's takes its turn across the road at the five-star Hotel Beau Rivage. Among Sotheby's showcase offers is a parure featuring diamonds once owned by Russian empress Catherine I that were given to her by her husband, czar Peter the Great, who led Russia until his death in 1725. In 1711, Catherine was worried that

a raging conflict with the Ottoman Empire posed an existential threat to Russia and ordered her husband-in-the middle of the night to draft a peace treaty, Sotheby's said, citing historical records.

Without telling Peter, Catherine sent the peace proposal and all the jewels she was travelling with to the Ottoman Sultan Ahmed III. The Sultan "accepted these and was obviously delighted, and the truce was given and the (Russian) empire was saved", David Bennett, head of Sotheby's International Jewellery Division said. The parure featuring Catherine's diamonds is expected to sell for between \$3 million and \$5 million. In an auction heavy on Russian imperial treasures, Sotheby's is also offering a diamond necklace with a detachable clasp owned by empress Catherine II-Catherine the Great, who ruled Russia from 1762 to 1796. It is similarly valued at up to \$5 million.

### \$180 million of bling

Nothing sold on Tuesday night came close to the eye-popping records set by colored stones at recent sales. Christie's set the current mark in May, selling the 14.62-carat "Oppenheimer Blue" for \$57.54 million. That beat a record set a year ago by Sotheby's, when Hong Kong billionaire Joseph Lau bought the 12.03-carat "Blue Moon of Josephine" for \$48.4 million. Christie's is aiming to capitalize on the still-solid colored stones market with a 9.14-carat Fancy Vivid Pink estimated at \$16-\$18 million. The rare "Fancy Vivid" classification is awarded by the Gemological Institute of America to signify a stone's exceptional color and clarity. Sotheby's top colored gem going under the hammer this week is the 8.01-carat "Sky Blue Diamond", with a pre-auction estimated price of \$15-\$25 million. Sotheby's has estimated its 342-lot auction at a total of \$100 million, while Christie's is offering 220 lots, with an estimated value of \$80 million. —AFP

## INDIA'S GOLD TRADERS ON EDGE AS MODI FIGHTS 'BLACK MONEY'

### TRADERS FEAR IMPORT BAN SOON; 'A RUMOR'

**NEW DELHI:** Some Indian gold traders are placing bulk, short-term import orders on fears that Prime Minister Narendra Modi might soon add curbs on overseas purchases of the metal to his withdrawal of high-denomination banknotes in his fight against 'black money', traders and jewelers said. India is the world's second biggest gold buyer, and it is estimated that one-third of its annual demand of up to 1,000 tons is paid for in black money - untaxed funds held in secret by citizens in cash that don't appear in any official accounts.

Modi has said he may not stop at the shock currency move that has led to a massive cash shortage, but has not made clear what his next step would be in his drive to uncover the wealth. That uncertainty is likely to create sharp swings in purchases, affecting world prices. "We're uncertain about what the government will do next," said Daman Prakash Rathod, a director at MNC Bullion in the southern city of Chennai. "No legal business trader is willing to risk very big quantity. (Some) want to buy 2-3 kgs extra so that in future they could conduct their business for a month or two until the situation is sorted out."

Panicked gold traders and jewelers have circulated messages amongst themselves saying the government could ban import of gold for domestic use from early next year to March, according to several jewelers in New Delhi and Mumbai who have seen the message. India's ongoing wedding season - traditionally a focus for gifting gold - is fuelling the disquiet. The All India Gems and Jewelry Trade Federation dismissed the messages among traders as a rumor, but some are nevertheless buying extra gold for the wedding season and to see



**KOLKATA:** A man holds a charred facsimile of the discontinued Indian currency 500 note after a protest by a traders association demanding adequate arrangement to exchange discontinued currency notes outside Reserve Bank of India in Kolkata yesterday. —AP

themselves through the next few months, said an official with the India Bullion And Jewelers Association. A finance ministry spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

### '50 pct premium'

One senior official involved with government policy-making on gold said there has been no discussion on import curbs but that supply has gone up through "unofficial channels". "If you see the premiums, you know that there is demand," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. In domestic markets,

jewelers are charging premiums of as high as 50 percent but have not committed to buy any new gold, said several jewelers who declined to be identified. The cash crunch has badly hit demand in rural areas, which account for two-thirds of total demand. But in the main gold markets of Zaveri Bazaar in Mumbai and Karol Bagh in New Delhi, there are ready buyers of the metal willing to pay in the old bills.

The current rate in the trade - illegal since Modi's Nov 15 move to withdraw the notes - is 45,000 rupees (\$663) per 10 gms in Karol Bagh, 53 percent higher than the

official price, said one jeweler who has been in the trade for 14 years. The rate is similar in Zaveri Bazaar. "I'm getting non-stop calls from unknown numbers from people asking for gold," the jeweller told a Reuters reporter in an interview inside his shuttered showroom. "A client last week left a bag full of a few lakh rupees (1 lakh = 100,000 rupees) outside our showroom saying that he had left his (dues) for us to pick up or throw out," the jeweler said. "If you see, 750 tons used to be the total import a year, this must have happened in the last few days alone." —Reuters



## AUB CELEBRATES LISTING OF \$200 MILLION SUKUK ON NASDAQ DUBAI

**KUWAIT:** Richard Groves, Chief Executive Officer of Ahli United Bank (AUB) Kuwait rang the market-opening bell yesterday to celebrate the listing on Nasdaq Dubai of a \$200 million Sukuk. The listing underlines Dubai's status as the global leader for Sukuk listings, with a total nominal value of \$45.75 billion from issuers in the GCC and beyond. As the third Kuwait listing on Nasdaq Dubai, it also reflects the growing capital markets ties between Kuwait and the UAE.

The bell-ringing ceremony took place in the presence of His Excellency Essa Kazim, Governor of Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), Secretary General of Dubai Islamic Economy Development Centre (DIEDC), and Chairman of Dubai Financial Market (DFM); Abdul Wahed Al Fahim, Chairman of Nasdaq Dubai; and Hamed Ali, Chief Executive of Nasdaq Dubai. Senior representatives from Ahli United Bank included Richard Groves, CEO of AUB Kuwait, Moataz El Rafe, Senior Deputy CEO of AUB Kuwait and CB Ganesh, CEO of AUB Dubai.

HE Essa Kazim, Governor of DIFC, Secretary General of DIEDC and Chairman of DFM said

"Ahli United Bank Kuwait's decision to list its Sukuk in Dubai reinforces the traditional financial ties between Kuwait and the UAE, which play an important role in regional economic cooperation and prosperity. The Sukuk strengthens the growth of Dubai as the global capital of the Islamic Economy under the initiative launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President and Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai."

Richard Groves, CEO of Ahli United Bank Kuwait said, "AUB Kuwait's Sukuk has achieved considerable success, reflecting the Bank's position as a leading Islamic financial institution in Kuwait. With strong demand from investors in the Middle East, Asia and Europe, the Sukuk was more than three times oversubscribed, reflecting the confidence the market has in the issuance and in the economic climate in Kuwait, and in the region. Nasdaq Dubai's platform strengthens our links with a wide range of regional and international markets in a respected listing environment regulated to international standards."

Abdul Wahed Al Fahim, Chairman of Nasdaq Dubai, said: "Dubai's role as a centre of excellence for listing Islamic instruments is poised for further expansion, drawing on the growing expertise in the sector based in the Emirate, and its commitment to further development. Nasdaq Dubai will introduce further product development across the Islamic capital markets to meet the needs of issuers and investors."

Hamed Ali, Chief Executive of Nasdaq Dubai, said: "Nasdaq Dubai is pleased to welcome Ahli United Bank to our exchange and we congratulate the Bank's exceptional team for concluding a successful transaction and listing. As an international platform, we are keen to attract leading companies from Kuwait that appeal to our regional and international investor networks." "We strongly believe that the visibility offered through a listing with Nasdaq Dubai will enhance the international appeal of issuers from Kuwait and the wider region. Kuwait has a number of internationally attractive company stories and we look forward to being their platform of choice."

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## VIVA ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 'MORE' PRIZES CAMPAIGN

**KUWAIT:** VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced 4th week draw's winners of KD 100, of "more" prizes campaign for postpaid customers. The names of daily prize winners (KD 100) from 8 November until 14 November are as follows: Ryan Orzame Balacano, Housam Gh R Alhazem, Tbaib Hajjaj Ayyad Alazmi, Mahmoud Abdulghani Abdulghani Ibrahim, Talal Eid Abdullah Alrasheedi, Yousef Nashed Labeeb Nashed, Helen

Rose Staana Salomon. VIVA gives the customers a wonderful opportunity to win amazing cash prizes, KD 100 daily and KD 1000 at the end of each month, once they pay their VIVA bills through Direct Debit, VIVA website, VIVA's Kiosks, VIVA App or by calling 102. Customers earn one chance for each KD 1. To find out more about VIVA's new campaign, visit one of the 72 VIVA branches, or the VIVA website at www.viva.com.kw, or call VIVA's 24-hour call center on 102.



# TOILETS, TRADE AND TOWNS; BOOM TIME FOR ASIA'S PLASTIC MAKERS

## DEMAND DRIVEN BY 'CLEAN INDIA' SANITATION PROGRAM

**BEIJING:** From India's plan to plumb in over 100 million toilets in six years to China's ambitious new Silk Road network and the continued movement of millions of people into cities across Asia, plastic makers face years of strong demand. And, because they are closer to end-users and manufacturing hubs, Asian petrochemical makers are best placed to ride the boom.

Their profits and share prices are rising and they're investing in new projects to expand their business. Chinese futures prices for PVC (polyvinyl chloride), used in products from pipes to bank cards, have risen more than 80 percent this year. Petrochemicals, seen as a niche business in the oil industry, are used in 70 percent of manufactured goods - from mobile phones and yoga pants to cars and food packaging - and bring in valuable revenue for a sector otherwise battling over-supply.

Annual demand for ethylene, the most-used compound among many petrochemical products, is expected to grow at over 10 percent in the coming decade, analysts say. In just one illustration of how demand is set to grow, the "Clean India" program, seeking to end open defecation by 2022, has been welcomed by the Indian Petrochemical Industry group as a "boom for the plastics industry" - requiring building hundreds of millions of toilets, waste pipes and water supply systems to bring clean sanitation to more than 700 million people.

"There is tremendous potential for petrochemical demand to go up because per capita consumption is so low. There is a plastic usage in every utility," said B. Ashok, chairman of Indian Oil Corp, which has a petrochemical plant at its

refinery in Panipat, to the north of Delhi. "Demand is strong not only for toilets. India is short of domestic PVC supplies and has been sourcing from countries including South Korea, so Korean export volumes are growing," said Hwang Kyu-won, analyst at Yuanta Securities in Seoul.

### 'Lion's share'

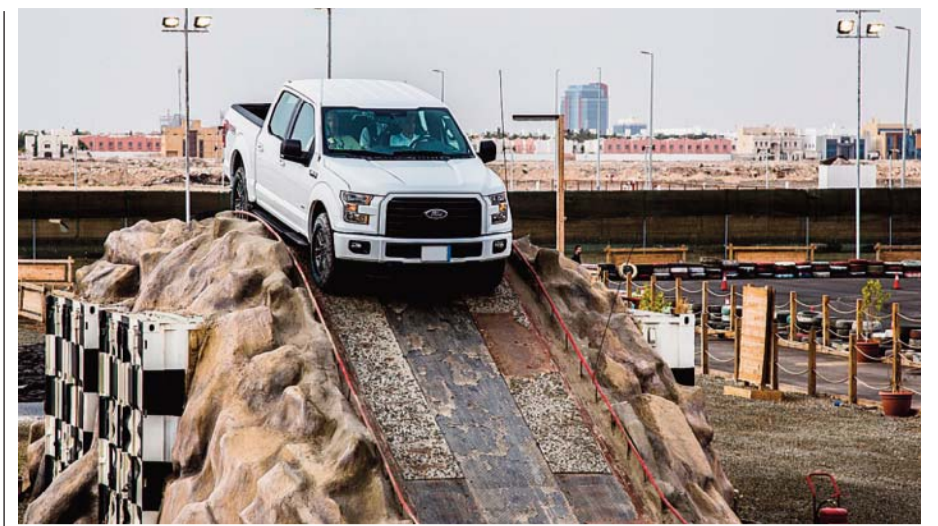
China's "One Belt, One Road" project - to build a vast rail, road, shipping and factory network between China, central Asia, Africa and Europe - will also require millions of tons of plastic materials, noted Luna Kim, principal consultant at Chemical Market Research Inc. This, together with the urbanization of tens of millions of people across Asia each year, means the region will have as many as 650 million new petrochemical customers within two decades, predicts research firm IHS Markit.

Mark Eramo, vice president for global chemical business development at IHS Markit, said the Asia Pacific region will "have the lion's share of the total investments" in petrochemicals until 2025, adding another 100 million tons of basic chemical production, including ethylene. "Ethylene and its related product supply will remain tight over the next 12 months," Japanese bank Nomura said in an investor note. The demand boom is showing across markets, with IHS Markit expecting overall 2016 Asian ethylene margins of \$600 per ton, up from below \$400 last year. In Thailand, PTT, Thai Oil and Siam Cement all reported strong profits in the last month, citing the performance of their petrochemical divisions.

### Advantage Asia

To be sure, plastic makers from the United States, Europe and the Middle East, such as BASF, Exxon Mobil, Total and Dow Chemical, also hope to profit from Asia's soaring demand, but those closer to that demand should benefit most from lower transit costs and cheaper feedstock prices. "Asian petrochemical makers can be winners over US petrochemical makers," said Jae-sung Yoon, analyst at Hana Financial Investment in South Korea. Asia's leading refiner Sinopec Corp has announced a joint venture with Taiwan's Dynamic Ever Investments to build a petrochemical complex in China's southeastern Fujian province, while Korea Petrochemical Industry Corp and Malaysia-based Lotte Chemical Titan plan to expand next year. In the Philippines, JG Summit has also said it plans to expand.

Malaysia's state-owned energy firm Petronas has a \$27 billion refining and petrochemical complex due to come on stream in 2019. Asian petrochemical makers are also at an advantage in that they largely use the fossil fuel naphtha as a feedstock, while the main feedstock in the United States is natural gas. "By using natural gas as a feedstock, US ethane crackers can only obtain ethylene. However, Asian naphtha crackers can also produce other byproducts like butadiene and propylene," said Yoon at Hana Financial. This feedstock flexibility has helped Lotte Chemical, Formosa Petrochemical and India's Finolex Industries outperform share price gains at manufacturers based in other regions.—Reuters



## FORD COMES TO TOWN WITH 'DRIVE THE FUTURE OF TOUGH' TRUCK TOUR

**KUWAIT:** Ford Middle East and Alghanim Auto, the only importer authorized by Ford Motor Company to import Ford and MotorCraft products in Kuwait, are partnering to kick off the latest round of the 2016 Truck Tour in Kuwait City this month, bringing the award winning Built Ford Tough F-150 and Ranger pickups, in addition to the full-size Expedition, Ford's largest utility vehicle, closer to Kuwaiti consumers.

The roadshow which earlier this year enjoyed great success in the region, will commence the next phase in Kuwait, at the Sirbb Circuit, from November 24th to 26th between 4 pm and 10 pm, where fans and motoring enthusiasts will have access to three unique activations - Ford Ranger and F-150 Drive, and the Expedition Display. Apart from first-hand experience on Ford's world-class and award-winning truck and SUV offerings, the 2016 Drive the Future of Tough Truck Tour includes various

engagement activities such as interactive gaming, remote-controlled Ford F-150 Raptor model racing and 3D ground art.

"Together with Alghanim Auto, we are excited to bring the Ford Truck Tour to our Kuwait-based customers," said Thierry Sabbagh, managing director, Ford Middle East. "Drive the Future of Tough is a great platform for our Kuwaiti customers to learn and experience what our 'Built Ford Tough' trucks are capable of. With the line-up of activities at hand, we are confident Ford fans and truck fanatics are going to enjoy this amazing experience." Customers who would like to participate in this event must register in advance and are encouraged to do so by November 23rd. The Sirbb Circuit is located in Shuwaikh Industrial Area 1, Block 1, Street 11, Kuwait City. For more information and registration, please visit <https://www.me.ford.com/en/kwt/truck-tour/>.



## MENA EFFIE AWARDS CELEBRATE WINNERS

**DUBAI:** The regional winners of this year's MENA Effie Awards were announced at a ceremony in the glamorous environment of the Pavilion, Armani Hotel Dubai. This marks the eighth edition of this annual program, which honors the greatest and most effective marketing campaigns in the region. More than 1,500 people, including some of the most talented marketers in the region, attended a gala finale, with awards across 23 categories in what is widely considered to be the gold standard of regional creative marketing brilliance.

Alexandre Hawari, Co-CEO of Mediaquest Corp, said: "The well-considered and creative entries this year attained an extremely high standard, providing a tremendously challenging range of choices." "We had some of the most notable and highly-regarded regional creative figures participating as judges for these awards, to help us distinguish the best marketing campaigns across the region," he added. "Both of these factors mean that all of those who won at this occasion can take great pride in the ultimate regional endorsement towards the quality and effectiveness of a marketing campaign, brand advertiser or agency."

Hawari continued: "As organizers of the MENA Effie Awards, we would like to congratulate all of this year's winners. We would also like to give great credit to the runners-up, who came very close to being worthy winners in close contests. This ceremony proved to be a night to remember for all involved in this benchmark for regional marketing success and I would like to thank everyone who organized and participated in an enjoyable and rewarding evening."

Commenting on MENA Effie 2016, Majed Al Suwaidi, Managing Director, Dubai Media City, said: "Dubai Media



City sponsored the MENA Effie 2016 Awards to reiterate the importance of fostering a creative ecosystem for the region, especially at a time when the wider industry undergoes a digital transformation. Our endorsement to MENA Effie 2016 stems from our keenness in recognizing our business partners and the wider creative community who are leading change in the evolving advertising industry."

He added: "The engaging and thought-provoking campaigns that we witnessed at the MENA Effie 2016 are a testament of the great work that is being produced regionally. We witnessed some integrated campaigns that showcased how brands are embracing new technologies to

engage with consumers in a smarter and more effective way." The winners under the Product & Services category were: Automotive: Leo Burnett Cairo for Renault Egypt; Travel, Tourism and Transportation: Memac Ogilvy Label Tunisia and Memac Ogilvy Algeria for ONTT (Silver)

Entertainment & Sports: Leo Burnett Dubai and Starcom Dubai for du telecom and Impact BBDO Dubai and OMD Beirut for LotoLibanaise; Telecommunications / Mobiles and Internet: J. Walter Thompson KSA for Saudi Telecom Company - STC, and FP7/CAI for Orange (Mobilirecently re-branded to Orange); Retail & Luxury: J. Walter Thompson KSA for Jarir Bookstore, Personal Care Products won by Mindshare MENA Dubai for Nana

(Silver); Non - Food FMCG: TBWA/RAAD Dubai and OMD Dubai for Pril (Silver); Media: Publicis ME Dubai and MEC MENA Dubai for MAGGI and FP7/CAS and UM MENA for Coca-Cola Morocco.

Healthcare Services: FP7/CAI for Baheya Cancer Hospital; Food & Beverage - FMCG: Publicis ME, Dubai for NESCAFE Arabiana and FP7/CAI and Initiative Media Cairo for Labanita; Electronics / Computers: Starcom Dubai for Samsung Gulf Electronics (Bronze); Cosmetics and Fragrances: Digital Republic Linked By Isobar for Pond's (Bronze), and Banking; Finance and Insurance: J. Walter Thompson Kuwait for Boubyan Bank.

The winners under the Specialty category were: Social Good - Non-Profit: Leo Burnett Beirut and MSL Group Middle East (Beirut) for Kafa; Social Good - Corporate Brands: J. Walter Thompson Beirut for Bou Khalil Supermarché; Branded Content: J. Walter Thompson KSA for Jarir Bookstore and FP7/CAI and Initiative Media Cairo for Labanita; Seasonal Marketing: Impact BBDO Dubai for Sadia and FP7/DXB and Memac Ogilvy & Mather Dubai for Coca-Cola Middle East; Single Media Company Activation: Mediavest/Spark for Project We Forgot and J. Walter Thompson Dubai for Friends of Cancer Patients (both Silver)

Media Idea: J. Walter Thompson Beirut for Bou Khalil Supermarché; Best Youth Marketing Campaign: J. Walter Thompson Experience Cairo for Vodafone Egypt Brand Experience: TBWA/RAAD Dubai and OMD Dubai for Pril and FP7/DXB and UM MENA for Fanta; New Products / Services Category: Impact BBDO Cairo for TECNO. The Special Competition category saw FP7/DXB winning in Shopper Marketing with their campaign for Puck.

## MALAYSIA TRIES TO PROTECT ITS WEAKENING CURRENCY

**HONG KONG:** Foreign banks have been asked to make a written commitment to Malaysia's central bank to stop trading the ringgit in the offshore non-deliverable forwards market in the bank's latest move to protect a weakening currency, banking sources said. Foreign banks have been sent a form letter to sign, which asks them for an "unconditional representation and commitment" to stop trading in any offshore Malaysian ringgit non-deliverable forwards or offshore derivatives. The letters were sent by banks in Malaysia who hold bonds and other Malaysian assets as custodians for foreign banks. The form letters are addressed to Bank Negara Malaysia. Two separate sources at banks confirmed getting the form letter, which Reuters reviewed.

The letters also asks financial institutions to provide a detailed plan to the central bank if they need to make ringgit transactions onshore and to seek help from Malaysian financial institutions for any foreign exchange transaction needs.

Bank Negara in a statement to Reuters yesterday confirmed it has made the request through banks in Malaysia. "Bank Negara Malaysia has requested through onshore banks that any non-resident banks, which transact in the forex market, to attest that they are not and will not engage in NDF related transactions," the Bank Negara statement said.

Foreign holdings account for 40 percent of the total outstanding bond market in Malaysia, one of the largest foreign ownerships in Asia. Foreigners have been fleeing the Malaysian market in a global bond rout following Donald Trump's election as US President last week, which sent the dollar soaring and has hit emerging market currencies particularly hard. Trump is expected to adopt policies that are likely to increase interest rates faster than previously thought. Investors typically use the liquid NDF markets in Singapore and Hong Kong to exchange ringgit for dollars because of the many restrictions in the domestic market.—Reuters

## ACIC 'LEAD MANAGER' FOR NIG KD25 MILLION BOND ISSUANCE

**KUWAIT:** Ahli Capital Investment Co KSCC (ACIC) has announced it is to be lead manager and subscription agent for National Industries Group's (NIG) prospective KD25 million senior debt and asset backed bond, which was announced on 13 November 2016, following regulatory clearance earlier this year. ACIC, a fully owned subsidiary company of Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait KSCC (ABK), will act as the Lead Manager and Subscription Agent with ABK as the Paying Agent. Al Ruwayeh & Partners (ASAR) is the legal advisor to the lead manager and subscription agent with Al Hossam Legal (Al-Turqi & Partners) acting as legal advisor to the issuer.

The bond will have a floating interest rate of 2.25% per annum over Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) Discount Rate and will be backed

by a portfolio of Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) listed securities managed by ACIC with an initial LTV of 83% and trigger LTV 89%. The bond will reach maturity after

five years with an option to call the bond by the end of the third year. Muhsen Al Harbi, CEO of ACIC said. "ACIC is very proud to play a key role in structuring and leading this

unique transaction for NIG, as well as providing our clients and investors in general with an opportunity to invest in an excellent KD denominated investment grade product.

Our goal is to offer clients the very best world-class advisory services to assist them in developing and achieving their business objectives and we appreciate NIG's trust in our partnership approach." Capital Intelligence, the international rating agency, has rated the issue as 'BBB', supported by the good operating performance of NIG as well the segregated securities portfolio of liquid equity investments held by ACIC as an independent custodian. NIG has said it plans to use the net proceeds from the offering for general corporate purposes.





## FACEBOOK'S FAKE NEWS PROBLEM: WHAT'S ITS RESPONSIBILITY?

**NEW YORK:** Facebook is under fire for failing to rein in fake and biased news stories that some believe may have swayed the presidential election. Its predicament stems from this basic conundrum: It exercises great control over the news its users see, but it declines to assume the editorial responsibility that traditional publishers do. On Monday, Facebook took a minor step to address the issue, clarifying its advertising policy to emphasize that it won't display ads on sites that run information that is "illegal, misleading or deceptive, which includes fake news."

The company said it was merely making explicit a policy that was already implied. Its move followed a similar step by Google earlier on Monday, after the search giant acknowledged that it had let a false article about the election results slip into its list of recommended news stories. In the case of both companies, the aim is to discourage fake-news sites by depriving them of revenue.

Facebook is also said to be facing brewing internal turmoil over its influence and what it can and should do about it.

Employees have expressed concern over Facebook's role in spreading misinformation and racist memes largely associated with the alt-right, according to The New York Times and BuzzFeed. Some have reportedly formed an unofficial task force to investigate the role the company played in the election. Founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg, however, insists that Facebook remains a neutral technology platform where its users can share anything they want, with only a tiny fraction of it fake or problematic. Last week, Zuckerberg called the idea that voters might have been influenced by what they saw on Facebook - fake, uber-partisan stories, such as a false one about Pope Francis endorsing Donald Trump for president - "pretty crazy."

**Facebook control**  
People update to Facebook so fre-

quently that the company has no choice but to filter what everyone sees in their news feeds - the main artery through which users see posts from their friends, family, businesses, news sources and celebrities they follow. The company's secret algorithms are designed to deliver the posts from friends and other sources that will draw people in and lead them to read and click and "like" and share - "maximizing their engagement," in Facebook's jargon. Facebook frequently tweaks its algorithm to improve engagement. Various changes have been aimed at shutting out sites that promote click-bait and other garbage that users say they don't want to see, even as they click on it and share away. When users are surrounded by posts they want to see, they're more likely to stick around.

That's key to Facebook's advertising business. But it can be problematic when it comes to false but highly interesting posts. Facebook's news feed "maximizes for engagement. As we've learned in this

election, bulls-t is highly engaging," former Facebook product designer Bobby Goodlatte wrote in an Election Day post. "Highly partisan, fact-light outlets" on both the right and the left, he wrote, "have no concern for the truth, and really only care for engagement. ... It's now clear that democracy suffers if our news environment incentivizes bulls-t."

Social media companies today have to acknowledge that they are news organizations, said Jeffrey Herbst, president and CEO of the Newseum, a journalism museum in Washington. "Not like news companies of the 20th century," he added. "But not just pipes where people get their news. They determine what is news." In a post Saturday night, Zuckerberg rejected that idea. "News and media are not the primary things people do on Facebook, so I find it odd when people insist we call ourselves a news or media company in order to acknowledge its importance," he wrote. "Facebook is mostly about helping people stay con-

ected with friends and family."

### Facebook as newspaper?

Back in 2013, Zuckerberg said he wanted Facebook to be people's "own personal newspaper," one that delivers the stories most interesting and important to them. That's still the company's goal - though minus any reference to itself as a media company of any kind. Of course, fake stuff has existed on the internet long before Facebook. And under the law, Facebook is no more responsible for what appears on its site than "the paper mills that print newspapers are responsible for their content," said Steve Jones, a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago who studies communication technology. At the same time, Jones said he thinks the broader issue of Facebook's responsibility is one that's going to be "debated forever." "Even the notion of truth is something that's highly contested at this point," he said. — AP

## IN THE WORLD OF INTERNET-ENABLED THINGS, US SAYS 'SECURITY NEEDED'

**WASHINGTON:** The Obama administration urged companies on Tuesday to make millions of devices safe from hacking, underscoring the risks posed by an increasingly bewildering array of internet-connected products permeating daily life, covering everything from fitness trackers to computers in automobiles. In a report obtained by The Associated Press, the Homeland Security Department described runaway security problems with devices that have been made internet-capable in recent years, a group that includes medical implants, surveillance cameras, home appliances, digital video recorders, thermostats and baby monitors.

It said they posed "substantial safety and economic risks," recommending immediate action by software and hardware developers, service providers, manufacturers and commercial and government buyers. No specific penalties were proposed for manufacturers failing to comply. No blame was placed on consumers buying and operating such products.

"The growing dependency on network-connected technologies is outpacing the means to secure them," Homeland Secretary Jeh Johnson said. The department's strategy represents an attempt to organize the so-far scattered cybersecurity efforts for the category of devices known as the "internet of things." It comes less than a month after hackers harnessed an army of 100,000 internet-connected devices around the world, such as DVRs and security cameras, to attack Dyn Co., which helps route internet traffic to its destination. It caused temporary internet outages to sites that included Twitter, PayPal, Pinterest, Reddit and Spotify.

Such threats are likely to increase, US officials warn. "Securing the internet of things has become a matter of homeland security," Johnson said. Tuesday's guidance, he added, should help companies "make informed security decisions." The report culminates a six-month review by Robert Silvers, the assistant homeland security secretary for cyber policy, who coordinated

with cybersecurity experts, industry associations and branches of the government such as the Justice and State departments. They spoke about possibly holding companies accountable through product liability principles and how to create a uniform rulebook for securing these devices.

"We need to have a very serious national conversation about what the approach is, and we need to do it urgently," Silvers said. The internet of things is decentralized and enormously complex, making it difficult to regulate. A camera with online capabilities may be designed in California, manufactured in China with parts from Taiwan and sold to someone who operates it on Germany's network. Silvers said there is no benefit to "190 different national approaches." Some industrial sectors have moved forward with their own recommendations. In September, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration published guidelines for self-driving cars. The Food and Drug Administration published its own guidance for medical devices in January. For more than a decade, companies have added internet capabilities to devices as an additional feature, sometimes without security considerations. But adding security in wholesale fashion afterward is often more costly. It is also more complicated when change standard industry practices.

Some fixes are easier than others. The government urged companies to ensure security setting are turned on by default. Unique passwords for each device should be required so hackers can't use a single stolen password to control thousands or more devices. Manufacturers ought to make products whose vulnerabilities can be fixed remotely. "You can't rely on a consumer to spend three hours to upgrade her toaster software. It's not going to happen," Silvers said. The government also highlighted the need for an "end-of-life strategy" for devices that aren't created to last indefinitely. As a result, they won't be patched and updated forever, leading to new vulnerabilities for consumers using devices beyond certain expiration dates. — AP



CALIFORNIA: A man rides a bike past a Google sign at the Googleplex in Menlo Park, California. — AFP

## GOOGLE TEACHES MACHINES TO BECOME FLUENT TRANSLATORS

### GOOGLE COMMITS TO POST-BREXIT UK

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Google is promising that its widely used translation service is now even more fluent, thanks to an advance that's enabling its computers to interpret complete sentences. That may sound simple, but it took years of engineering to pull off. Until now, Google's technology analyzed phrases in pieces and then cobbled together a sometimes stilted translation. Now that Google's machines can interpret entire sentences, the translations of extended passages of text should read and sound much more like a native speaker of the language.

The technology, dubbed "neural machine translation," is similar to what Google has been using for the past few years to identify people and objects in pictures stored in its Photos service. Google described its neural machine tool as the biggest leap for its translation service in a decade. Forrester Research analyst Mike Gualtieri also believes Google's new method is a significant breakthrough, although he said he expects it to make some potentially embarrassing mistakes in its early stages, much like the Photos service misidentified some things when it first rolled out.

"I doubt it will be translating like the computers on 'Star Trek' quite yet," Gualtieri said. Starting Tuesday, the technology is being used to translate phrases to and from English and eight other languages - French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Turkish. Those languages cover about one-third of all the translation requests that Google gets. It says that on average it translates about 140 billion words per day for the more than 500 million people who use the service. Google, part of Alphabet Inc, eventually hopes to apply the neural machine technology on all 103 languages in its translation service.

### Vote of confidence

In another development, Google delivered a vote of confidence in London's future as a technological hub after the Brexit vote on Tuesday by announcing plans for a new building in the King's Cross area of the city that will house thousands of extra engineers. Google's Chief Executive Sundar Pichai said computer science had a great future in Britain, citing the talent pool, educational institutions, and passion for innovation present in the country. "That's why we are investing in London in both engineering talent and infrastructure," he said. The 10-storey building, Google's first wholly owned and designed outside the United States, will increase its presence in King's Cross to more than 1 million square feet, enough for more than 7,000 employees in total, the company said.

Google has 5,700 employees and contractors in the UK, including about 2,000 engineers housed in the recently opened building in King's Cross where Pichai announced the expansion. Pichai, who became CEO in October 2015 when parent company Alphabet Inc was created, said he was optimistic about Britain's future, despite the uncertainty caused by June's vote to leave the European Union. "Historically, the UK has been an open and connected economy, and like a lot of businesses we are proud of and rely on the fact that we recruit the best talent from around world," he said. "We are optimistic that this situation will continue."

"We understand there is uncertainty and even concerns about topics like Brexit and the pace of technological change in our times, but we know for

certain that web and digital technology will be an engine of growth for the UK for years to come." British Finance Minister Philip Hammond said the investment showed leading firms were still choosing to invest in Britain, while the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan said inflows remain "robust" post-Brexit. "London isn't just the tech capital of Europe, we are on the shoulder of New York and we are catching up with Silicon Valley," Khan said at the event. "Investment into the capital post-Brexit remains robust, so Google's expansion will further strengthen our city's reputation as a global leader in digital technology."

Pichai made reference in his speech to another event that exposed a division in a western society: the US election. "Recent events, including the election in the US, have clearly surfaced challenges with inequality and people feeling marginalized," he said. These were "long-term and difficult" problems to solve, he said, but it was his hope that Google would play a constructive role in addressing some of these challenges. The company, along with Facebook, on Monday announced measures aimed at halting the spread of "fake news" on the internet by targeting how some purveyors of phony content make money: advertising. — Agencies



The PhotoScan app is demonstrated in New York. Google wants to make digitizing your old photo prints as easy as opening an app. The new app for iPhones and Android phones will use the phone's camera to capture an old photo in four sections and stitch them together, much like a panorama shot. Google says this approach helps eliminate glare that can mar attempts to digitize print by simply photographing the whole photo. — AP

## WHATSAPP SUSPENDS GIVING FACEBOOK EUROPE USERS DATA

**SAN FRANCISCO:** WhatsApp has temporarily suspended giving parent company Facebook information about users in Europe for ad targeting, responding to concerns there over privacy, a source close to the matter said Tuesday. Conversations with officials in Europe over the past few months resulted in the social network deciding to only tapping into WhatsApp user data there for purposes such as fighting spam, according to the source.

The break was described as an effort to give regulators time to share privacy concerns and for Facebook to consider ways to address them. German data protection authorities in September cited privacy concerns when they blocked Facebook from collecting subscriber data from WhatsApp there. "It has to be (the users') decision whether they want to connect their account with Facebook," Hamburg's Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information Johannes Caspar said at the time.

"Facebook has to ask for their permission in advance." WhatsApp announced in August that it would begin sharing data with Facebook, in a bid to allow better tar-

geted advertising and to combat spam on the platform. Users of the instant messenger were given the ability to opt out of sending information to Facebook through settings in WhatsApp's applications on smartphones. European data protection group G29 formally expressed its concerns at the end of October. The G29 sent letters asking Facebook and WhatsApp to stop sharing data until appropriate legal safeguards were in place.

The sharing of WhatsApp user information with Facebook went beyond what subscribers consented to in the original terms of service, the G29 reasoned. Facebook bought WhatsApp about two years ago in a deal valued at \$19 billion. In mid-September, the European Commission recommended tighter privacy and security requirements for services including WhatsApp and Microsoft-owned video calling service Skype, saying they should be regulated more like traditional telecoms. Under the proposal, the commission would require companies like WhatsApp or Skype to offer emergency-calling services when customers dial traditional phone numbers as well as obey stricter privacy rules. — AFP

## DIGITAL SHADOWS RELEASES 'SHOOTING THE MESSENGER'

**DUBAI:** Digital Shadows, a provider of cyber situational awareness, released its Shooting the Messenger: Understanding the Threats to the Media and Broadcasting Industry report which revealed that revenue generating websites are a threat to media businesses' bottom line and are increasing with malvertising, extortion, propaganda, account take over and data leakage being the most common attacks targeted towards media and broadcast organizations.

The Digital Shadows report further revealed that the insecurity surrounding Internet of Things (IoT) devices, such as Wi-Fi-enabled cameras, surveillance systems, lighting, and even fridges, is presenting cybercriminals and hackers with more opportunities to target media and broadcast organizations. The report further revealed that as the media and broadcasting industry are increasingly conducting more business online as a growing demand from customers, there are projections of revenue increases of \$100 billion by 2020 but the threat of having their websites forced offline and becoming unavailable to customers represents a serious business risk.

"Attacks can either be opportunistic in nature, whereby a threat actor will target an organization having discovered a particular software vulnerability on a public-facing site, or more targeted as the organization may hold particularly sensitive or lucrative information that can be used for a variety of malicious uses. Broadcasting services represent potentially worthwhile targets as they often hold extensive personal details about their customers, such as names, dates of birth, physical addresses and payment information," said Chris Brown, VP EMEA, Digital Shadows.

The report further revealed that by their very nature, news sites attract large amounts of traffic. While this is great for their business models, it makes them an attractive target for malvertising, which is often used as a vector to compromise users who visit legitimate websites. Because advertising content can be inserted into high profile and reputable websites,

malvertising provides online criminals with an opportunity to push their attacks to web users who might not otherwise see the advertisements, due to the use of firewalls or other safety precautions. The 'Shooting the Messenger' report further revealed a different approach to cyberattacks - typosquatting - where attackers use domain names that are similar to launch a wide variety of online fraud including phishing campaigns. Chris Brown further added, "Given the availability and low barriers of entry to leverage DDoS tools, one can expect both the frequency and size of DDoS attacks to increase. However, DDoS attacks are only one piece of a far larger threat landscape for media organizations.

IoT botnets have also demonstrated the capability to launch high volume denial of service attacks and despite increasing awareness, the security of IoT devices is likely to remain an issue for the foreseeable future as a growing number of Internet-facing products are insecurely brought to the market and threat actors develop ways to exploit them. Security professionals must understand the other threats that pose risks to their industry including malvertising, extortion and data leakage and by understanding these threats, as well as the actors behind them, media and broadcasting companies can better secure themselves and their customers."

Email addresses of media and broadcasting organizations have also been leaked through other breaches. In a recent Digital Shadows report that analyzed the extent of credential compromise from the world's biggest 1,000 companies, many leaked credentials were discovered. By analyzing nearly 30,000 claimed breaches, discovered across paste sites, criminal forums and dark web sources, we discovered over 935,870 email and password combinations for the media and entertainment industry. The top breaches were, somewhat unsurprisingly, social media platforms. Indeed, MySpace, LinkedIn, and Tumblr breaches were responsible for a respective 41, 14 and 3 percent of the total leaked credentials.



Chris Brown



## BAD SMOG AHEAD: BEIJING TELLS STUDENTS TO STAY INDOORS

**BEIJING:** Authorities in Beijing warned yesterday that heavy pollution will persist this week, urging the suspension of outdoor school activities and construction projects.

The warning comes in the form of an orange alert, the second highest in a four-tier system. The alert signifies there will be three consecutive days of smog starting Thursday at particularly dangerous levels on the Chinese capital's air quality index. A red alert is issued if pollution is forecast to persist for more than three days.

Kindergartens and primary and middle schools were advised to cancel outdoor activities. There was no word on such an advisory for Beijing's high schools, which focus mainly on indoor test preparation. Construction sites that dot the ever-expanding city were targeted by authorities for the exhaust, dust and other pollution they add to the already toxic mix in the air.

Launched three years ago amid rising public

concern, the warning system is one way authorities are attempting to clean up China's dirty air after decades of breakneck economic growth that led to the construction of hundreds of coal-fired power plants and soaring car ownership.

Authorities say they're making progress. Environmental officials in Beijing said Monday that a key indicator of poor air quality - the density of the particulate matter PM2.5 - decreased in the first 10 months year-on-year.

Also Monday, the environmental campaign group Greenpeace East Asia reported that levels of the heavy metals arsenic, cadmium and lead in the PM2.5 in Beijing had fallen rapidly since 2013. It said the decline was directly linked to the closure of coal-fired power plants around the city.

The Beijing Municipal Environmental Monitoring Center acknowledged that the city's air was likely to worsen as the coal-powered winter heating system kicks in across northern China. — AP



**BEIJING:** A woman and a child wearing masks for protection against pollution exit a kindergarten with their children after finishing their classes yesterday. — AP



**NEW YORK:** In this Nov. 9, 2016, file photo, President-elect Donald Trump speaks during a rally. — AP

## TRUMP'S PATH ON HEALTH CARE LAW INTERSECTS WITH A LAWSUIT

### OBAMACARE INTO A FREE-FALL?

**WASHINGTON:** President-elect Donald Trump says he wants to preserve health insurance coverage even as he pursues repeal of the Obama-era overhaul that provided it to millions of uninsured people.

How his administration handles a pending lawsuit over billions of dollars in insurance subsidies will reveal whether Trump wants an orderly transition to a Republican-designed system or if he'd push "Obamacare" over a cliff. Stripping away the subsidies at issue in the case would put the program into a free-fall.

The question in the House v. Burwell case couldn't be more technical: whether the Affordable Care Act specifically states in its hundreds of pages that the government can pay money to help reduce out-of-pocket costs for low-income consumers on HealthCare.gov and state insurance markets.

Those subsidies for deductibles and copayments are paid directly to insurers, on top of the law's tax credits that reduce premiums for consumers. Since the ACA's basic coverage is fairly skimpy, the cost-sharing subsidies make it work for millions of people when they seek treatment. For example, subsidies can bring a \$1,500 hospital copayment down to \$100.

#### Republicans and Obamacare

House Republicans have taken the Obama

administration to court. They argue that the law lacks a specific congressional "appropriation" for the subsidies, estimated to total \$9 billion next year. A federal district judge in Washington, DC, agreed with the House and the case is now on appeal. The Obama administration has argued that the spending is automatically approved, or "appropriated," under the law. Otherwise lawmakers would have designed a system that they knew wasn't viable. More than half of health law customers are currently receiving cost-sharing subsidies.

The White House says the courts are not the place to try to settle funding disputes. The government's final brief in the case is due on Jan. 19, the day before Trump is to be inaugurated.

Trump, who has vowed to start taking apart the health care law on the first day of his administration, has a tailor-made opportunity: His administration could simply agree with the House that the payments are unconstitutional, and stop contesting the lawsuit.

"The Trump administration could immediately turn off the tap for making cost-sharing payments," said Mark Regan, legal director of the Disability Law Center of Alaska in Anchorage, and a defender of the law. "Turning the payments off would come close to destroying the market." Insurers could be stuck with massive losses because they would still have a

legal obligation to cover patients' out-of-pocket costs, but would get no reimbursement from the government.

Another approach might involve setting a deadline. "What Trump should do is on Day 1 say, 'We are not going to fight that lawsuit - those payments end at the end of calendar year 2017,'" said Michael Cannon, health policy director at the libertarian Cato Institute think tank. Cannon was one of the main proponents of an earlier legal challenge to the law's premium subsidies in certain states. That case was decided by the Supreme Court in favor of the administration.

A deadline would give consumers and insurers some time to adjust, and help focus Congress on the need to pass legislation to replace the ACA. But legally that could get complicated. If the Trump administration were to agree with the House that the subsidies are unconstitutional, how could it continue to make any payments at all? Congress would have to provide some sort of stopgap authority.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., is reviewing the issue. "We are in contact with the Trump transition team as we consider the House's options," said spokeswoman AshLee Strong. Insurers are worried. In a brief filed with the appeals court, they warned of \$1,000 premium increases and a market exodus by consumers and insurers. "A seismic shift," they called it. — AP

## THOUSANDS OF KIDS DYING IN NORTHEAST NIGERIA, SAYS SURVEY

**LAGOS, NIGERIA:** Thousands of children have died of starvation and disease in Boko Haram-ravaged northeastern Nigeria, Doctors Without Borders said Tuesday quoting a new survey that is forcing Nigerian officials to stop denying the crisis.

The Paris-based organization hopes that official recognition of the calamity in which "thousands are dying" will help bring urgent aid before older children also start dying. Natalie Roberts, emergency program manager for northeast Nigeria, told The Associated Press.

A survey of two refugee camps in the northeastern city of Maiduguri shows a quarter of the expected population of under-5 children is missing, assumed dead, according to the organization. Under-5 mortality rates in the camps are more than double the threshold for declaring an emergency, Roberts said in a phone interview from Paris.

Speaking on her return from northeastern Borno state, the birthplace of Boko Haram's Islamic uprising, she said the absence of young children was striking. "We only saw older brothers and sisters. No toddlers are straddling their big sisters' hips. No babies strapped to their mums' backs. It's as if they have just vanished," Roberts said.

#### Sounding the alarm

Doctors Without Borders first sounded the alarm in June but senior officials of the National Emergency Management Agency managing the camps as late as September denied any child was suffering malnutrition and accused the doctors of exaggerating the crisis to attract donations. That was after The Associated Press published images of matchstick-thin children fighting for their lives at an intensive feeding center in Maiduguri, run by the France-based

medical organization, also known as Medecins Sans Frontieres, or MSF.

The crisis is aggravated by alleged theft of food aid by emergency management officials being investigated by Nigeria's senate. "The difference now is that our figures have been checked by the statistician general, and we have official recognition from the government that they believe this is happening," Roberts said.

An estimated 75,000 children could die within a year because donors have provided only one-third of requested funding and twice as much, \$1 billion, is needed for the rest of the year and into 2017, says the United Nations.

A vital funding conference in Geneva next month could save the day, otherwise "it won't be long before we could be in the painful position of having to turn away sick and starving children," says the US-based Save the Children.

Some 2.6 million people including more than 1 million children have been driven from their homes by Nigeria's 7-year-old insurgency that has killed more than 20,000 people, left food-producing fields fallow, disrupted trade routes and destroyed wells, bridges and entire towns.

President Muhammadu Buhari last month set up a presidential committee to coordinate aid and the rebuilding of the northeast, even as an end to the rainy season has brought a predictable upsurge in attacks on military outposts and urban suicide bombings by the Islamic extremists.

Buhari and Nigeria's military have said aerial bombardments and a ground offensive that have forced the insurgents out of most towns has the extremists on the run. But aid agencies say they can barely venture outside Maiduguri for fear of danger and are using helicopters to reach dangerous areas. — AP



**MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA:** In this Monday, Aug. 29, 2016, file photo, a malnourished child is weighed on a scale at a clinic run by Doctors Without Borders. — AP

## CHOLESTEROL DRUG SHOWS PROMISE TO HELP REVERSE HEART DISEASE

**NEW ORLEANS:** For the first time, a new drug given along with a cholesterol-lowering statin medicine has proved able to shrink plaque that is clogging arteries, potentially giving a way to undo some of the damage of heart disease.

The difference was very small but doctors hope it will grow with longer treatment, and any reversal or stabilization of disease would be a win for patients and a long-sought goal. The drug, Amgen Inc.'s Repatha, also drove LDL, or bad cholesterol, down to levels rarely if ever seen in people before. Heart patients are told to aim for below 70, but some study participants got as low as 15. "There doesn't appear to be any level at which there is harm" from too little LDL, and the lower patients went, the more their plaque shrank, said one study leader, the Cleveland Clinic's Dr. Steven Nissen.

Results were published Tuesday by the Journal of the American Medical Association and discussed at an American Heart Association conference. Statins such as Lipitor and Crestor curb cholesterol production. Repatha and a similar drug, Praluent, block PCSK9, a substance that interferes with the liver's ability to remove cholesterol from the blood. Too much cholesterol, along with other substances, can build up and form plaque in arteries.

#### Drawbacks

The new drugs have drawbacks, though. Statins are pills sold as generics for as little as a

dime a day. The new ones are biotech drugs that are expensive to make - Repatha costs \$14,000 a year and insurers often won't pay. They must be given as shots every two weeks or once a month. People can do it themselves with a penlike device.

In the study, about 900 heart disease patients were given a strong statin and monthly shots of either Repatha or a dummy solution. Ultrasound images were taken of an artery with plaque at the start of the trial and 18 months later.

The average for bad cholesterol stayed around 93 for people given only the statin, but dropped to 37 for those on both drugs. The amount of artery plaque stayed about the same for the statin-only group but shrank 1 percent in those also given Repatha. Some people with more dramatic LDL declines saw plaque shrink 2 percent. "It's small, but it probably took patients 60 years to accumulate that plaque," so to see any change after just 18 months of treatment is good, said a cholesterol expert, Dr. Raul Santos of the University of Sao Paulo. — AP



**NEW ORLEANS:** This undated image provided by Amgen Inc. shows the cholesterol-lowering drug Repatha. — AP



**WHANGAPARAOA, NEW ZEALAND:** This undated handout photo received yesterday by Domino's Pizza shows a drone designed to deliver pizzas in flight. — AFP

## PIE IN THE SKY: NEW ZEALAND MAKES PIZZA DRONE DELIVERY

**WELLINGTON:** The world's first pizza drone delivery was claimed yesterday by the New Zealand division of fast food giant Domino's, as it looks to grab a slice of a potentially hot future market.

Domino's said it used an unmanned aerial vehicle to deliver two pizzas to a customer at Whangaparaoa, just north of Auckland. The firm's boss Don Meij said drones were set to become an essential part of pizza deliveries. "They can avoid traffic congestion and traffic lights, and safely reduce the delivery time and distance by travelling directly to customers'

homes," he said. "This is the future. Today's successful delivery was an important proof of this concept." He said tests would continue at Whangaparaoa this week, with a view to expanding the delivery area next year.

Domino's said it was also examining using drones in Australia, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Japan and Germany. In March, the company unveiled a robot cart being trialed in New Zealand that it claimed was the world's first driverless pizza delivery vehicle. — AFP



## VILLAGERS IN GOA FIGHT TO KEEP ANCIENT COMMUNITY LAND FROM UNIVERSITY

**LOLIEM, INDIA:** For Meena Varik, a teacher in Loliem village in southern Goa, the Bhagwati Moll plateau has always been community land meant for cattle grazing, temple processions and a wildlife reserve.

But if the state has its way, the plateau on a hillock abutting the village could be the site for an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and the land given over to classrooms, laboratories and hostels for hundreds of students and faculty members. "We are not against development, but this land is sacred to us and our way of life," Varik said, pointing to the trees and thick scrub that cover the plateau. "The village owns this land. No one has the right to take it away without our consent."

The plateau, easily accessed by several trails from Loliem, is the latest of Goa's historic comunidades, or community lands, to be caught up in a dispute as demand for land for industrial and development projects grows in India. About 70 percent of Goa's land is collectively owned by more than 200 comunidades across the state, administered by a traditional code that is centuries old.

Over the years, comunidade lands have been given up for roads, mines, industries and hotels. Many have been contentious decisions, creating deep divides across the state that is popular with tourists for its sandy beaches and laid back vibe. "These are common lands that have always been meant for the welfare of the whole village, not one single individual or entity," said Andre Antonio Pereira, advocate and secretary of an association of comunidades. "But we have slowly been losing these lands in the name of development. If we don't protect them, we will lose a part of our history," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The majority of land conflicts in India are related to common lands, including Goa's comunidades, with disputes centered around their governance, according to a study released on Wednesday by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Communities are dependent on common lands for farming, fishing, livestock rearing, salt manufacturing, and grazing.

While private lands have some protection, governments rarely respect the customary usage or communities' claims over common lands, the report said.

### Vague boundaries

Legislation such as a 2006 forest rights law and a 1996 act on tribal areas aim to protect the rights of farmers and local and indigenous communities over their lands, but the laws are usually diluted and poorly implemented, activists say.

The additional challenge with comunidades, which pre-date the arrival of the Portuguese and was codified in the 16th century, is their informal management, said Raison Almeida, chairman of the Green Goa Foundation in Margao.

"The problem is that we are not very organized. We don't even know the extent of our comunidades - their boundaries, what's in them," he said. "To better protect - and even monetise - the comunidades, we must document them and organise ourselves better."

India has undertaken a massive exercise to digitise land records, even as states struggle to survey land and update records that are more than a cen-

tury old. Meanwhile, the Goa government has locked horns with villagers over several projects, including land for a new airport in the northern part of the state, as well as for a National Institute of Technology in south Goa.

The federal government approved setting up an IIT campus in Goa about two years ago, and the institute began operations from a temporary campus in the state earlier this year. "The decision to locate the IIT campus in Loliem was made by the state government in consultation with village and district officials," said Vivek Kamat, director at the Directorate of Technical Education.

"If villagers turn down the project, we will have to see." Villagers in Loliem, which lies in the southernmost tip of the state, said they became aware of the prestigious university was to be built on about 300 acres (120 hectares) of land on the Bhagwati Moll plateau a few months ago. Since then, they have written to state and federal officials, opposing the plan, and also held a protest march to the district headquarters. They say comunidade officials, who have given their approval, are acting on their own.

Villagers have demanded a meeting of the village council, which they say has also not kept them informed. The council will issue some of the permits for the construction of the campus. "It's a prestigious educational institute, not a polluting industry, and we will benefit from it," said Bhushan Padgaonkar, sarpanch or head of the Loliem village council, and a member of the comunidade. "There is no industry in this village; we need to think of our future. The IIT will put the village on the map," he said.

### Sacred land

Villagers opposed to the project will attend a council meeting later this month "in large numbers" and oppose the resolution approving the project, said Renuka Prabhugaonkar of the Citizens' Committee of Loliem.

"We don't even have enough water and electricity for ourselves. How will there be enough with a large university?" she said, displaying copies of letters to state and federal officials and a campaign to collect signatures to protest the move. "How many jobs can a university generate, anyway? The damage to the village, the community will be far greater than any benefit from it," she said.

While comunidades have autonomy over the common lands, state officials are known to influence appointments of their officers and interfere in the running of the comunidades, said Almeida. Environmental activists have backed the protests in Loliem, saying the plateau is ecologically sensitive and is a natural aquifer for streams that sustain the village. The state has a spotty environmental record, with accusations of unplanned development damaging its famed coastline. A ban on mining in 2012, welcomed by environmentalists, was lifted three years later.

Villagers in Loliem say they are determined to fight till the state backs down. "We are simply protecting what our forefathers passed on to us. We want to preserve it for our children and grandchildren," said Varik, the teacher. "This project threatens our culture, our way of life." — Reuters



**NEW YORK:** In this Thursday, Oct. 20, 2016, photo, Dr. Jeffrey Ascherman, chief of the Division of Plastic Surgery and professor of surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center, holds an AeroForm kit during an interview.— AP

## DIY BREAST RECONSTRUCTION: DEVICE LETS WOMEN DO PART AT HOME CONTROL, COMFORTABLE AND CONVENIENT

**NEW YORK:** This might be the ultimate do-it-yourself project: Doctors are testing a device that would let women do part of their own breast reconstruction at home. It's aimed at not only making treatment more comfortable and convenient, but also giving women a sense of control - something cancer often takes away.

More than 100,000 women each year in the United States have surgery to remove a cancerous breast, and many of them choose reconstruction with an implant. To make room for a permanent one, many of them get a tissue expander, a temporary pouch that is gradually enlarged with saline to stretch the remaining skin and muscle. This means trips to the doctor every week or two for several months for injections of saline into the pouch, which can be a painful ordeal. "We would put as much saline as we could until basically the patient would say, 'I can't stand it anymore,'" said Dr. Daniel Jacobs, a Kaiser Permanente plastic surgeon in San Jose, California.

While biking home one day, Jacobs had an idea: Why couldn't a tiny can of compressed gas, like the one he carries to fix a flat tire, be used to let women inflate their own tissue expanders, a little each day so there is less stretching at a time and less pain? He helped found a company - AirXpanders Inc. of Palo Alto, California - to develop the device, called AeroForm. It's sold in Australia, approved in Europe and under review by the US Food and Drug Administration.

### Requirements

Its use requires no special training, wires or tubes - just a palm-sized remote control that activates a tiny cartridge inside the pouch to pump gas, up to three times a day according to how the woman feels.

In a company-sponsored study of 150 women, AeroForm patients finished tissue expansion in half the time and were able to get implants a month sooner than others who had the usual saline treatments, said the study leader, Dr. Jeffrey Ascherman, a plastic surgeon at Columbia University Presbyterian Medical Center in New York. "My patients love it," he said. When some women who agreed to be in the study learned they had been assigned to get the saline device for comparison, "I had one who started crying, and other women said, 'please Dr.

Ascherman, can't you change it?'" he said.

There was no difference in rates of side-effects such as infections, but seven of the air expanders malfunctioned versus only one saline one, Ascherman said. The device was tweaked to fix the problem, he said. "It's a really interesting concept," said one outside expert, Dr. Deanna Attai, a University of California at Los Angeles surgeon who is a past president of the American Society of Breast Surgeons.

"Giving the patient a sense of control is very psychologically important," because many women feel robbed of that, Attai said. "To a patient that's going through cancer treatment that could be a big deal."

Dr. Susan E. Downey, a Los Angeles plastic

surgeon who used the AeroForm on two patients in the study, said: "I think it will make life easier for a lot of people."

It did for 35-year-old Luincys Fernandez, a high school chemistry teacher who lives in Bogota, New Jersey, and teaches in New York. She was diagnosed with breast cancer a year ago, when pregnant with her second son, and used the AeroForm as part of the study. "I really, really liked it," she said. She carried the remote control in her purse and completed the tissue expansion in just 18 days. "It did not interrupt any of my daily activities. I could go back to normal. I could see the results right away and I could see where I wanted it to go" in terms of size and appearance, she said. — AP

## SCIENTISTS FEAR THE WORST UNDER A TRUMP PRESIDENCY

**WASHINGTON:** From the fight against climate change to dwindling budgets for research, the US scientific community fears the worst under Donald Trump, seen by many as the most hostile to science of any American president in history.

Trump will be "the first anti-science president we have ever had," warned Michael Lubell, director of public affairs for the American Physical Society in Washington, in the British journal Nature. "The consequences are going to be very, very severe."

Meanwhile, the vice president-elect, Indiana Governor Mike Pence, is an ultraconservative and a creationist who has rejected Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, the foundation of modern biology. "There's a fear that the scientific infrastructure in the US is going to be on its knees," said Robin Bell, a geophysicist at Columbia University and incoming president-elect of the American Geophysical Union. "Everything from funding to being able to attract the global leaders we need to do basic science research."

A key worry is how the New York billionaire declared climate change to be "hoax" orchestrated by the Chinese, and vowed to

withdraw from the Paris climate accord. "If Trump makes good on his campaign promises and pulls out of the Paris Treaty, it is difficult to see a path forward to keeping warming below dangerous levels," said Michael Mann, director of the Earth System Science Center (ESSC) at Pennsylvania State University.

### Lost decade

The United States is the second largest emitter of greenhouse gases after China. For John Abraham, professor of engineering at University of St. Thomas in Minnesota, the election of Trump "has cost us at least a decade" in the fight against global warming. "I study ocean warming and energy balances of the Earth," he told AFP.

"The data is staring us right in the face. We could not afford this election result. The only way we can avoid serious climate change is to rapidly implement Obama's work," he added. Early in October, nearly 400 scientists including 30 Nobel laureates wrote an open letter, criticizing Trump's proposed plans to abandon global climate deals. — AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



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# GULF BANK HOSTS INTERIOR DESIGN WORKSHOP FOR ITS PRIORITY CLIENTS

PRO-DESIGN, DESIGN CIRCLE SHED LIGHT ON DESIGN, LUXURY WORLD

**G**ulf Bank held an exclusive private interior design workshop for its "Priority Banking" clients. The workshop was conducted by Design Circle, part of Pro-Design Group, Kuwait's award winning interior design company, and the largest importer of high-end furniture in the Middle East. The event took place on the 8th of November at Design Circle's premises in the Tilal Complex in Shuwaikh.

Design Circle brought in a number of its top retail designers especially for the event to advise and discuss interior design, as well as furniture and material selection. The informal setting of the workshop ignited discussions and introduced new perspectives from the world of design and international luxury furniture brands like Minotti, Baxter, Fendi Casa, B&B Italia and

many others. Commenting on the workshop, one of the participants said: "I was pleased that Gulf Bank organized such a stimulating event. Meeting with designers and getting a clearer understanding of what makes good design was both helpful and informative. It was an extremely enjoyable session and well worthwhile".

In addition to the wide array of services and products Gulf Bank is providing, it is always seeking to understand the customer's interest and lifestyle habits and matching it with ideas and events which are both relevant and engaging.

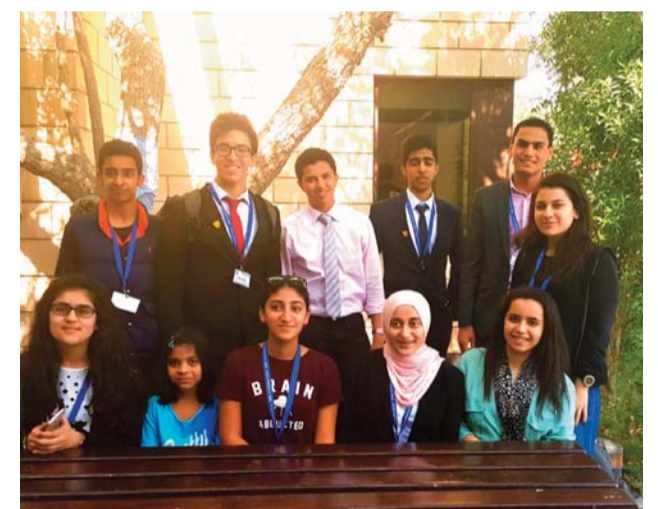
Founded in 2007 in Kuwait, Pro-Design Group has more than 4500sqm of showroom space in Kuwait. Since its formation, the company has completed many presti-

gious projects across the Middle East and North Africa ranging from luxury villas, apartments and palaces to the creation of exquisite commercial interiors.

With Gulf Bank Priority Banking, customers enjoy a personalized and preferential treatment coupled with a suite of Banking and investment products and services designed to meet their financial goals. A dedicated Relationship Manager is assigned to manage customers banking requirements in the comfort of dedicated private floors. In addition, they will receive a branded ATM card that recognizes their status across Gulf Bank Network, premium credit cards with exclusive privileges, discounted fees and waivers on banking transactions and added value benefits through our premium partner merchants.

## 46TH PALESTINIAN CULTURAL EXHIBITION OPENS MONDAY

**T**he Palestinian Culture Center in cooperation with Kuwait Graduates Society and the Embassy of Palestine in Kuwait is hosting the 46th Palestinian Cultural Exhibition, which is the second event of its kind to be organized this year. The event takes place from the 21st to the 24th of November 2016 at Kuwait Graduates Society's building in Kuwait City.



## KUWAIT NATIONAL ENGLISH SCHOOL AT BSME DEBATE, BAHRAIN 2016

**T**he BSME debating competition held annually at St Christopher's Bahrain is one of the biggest and prestigious inter-school debating competitions in the Middle East. Following the World Schools Debating Competition format, the event is fiercely competitive. Kuwait National English School made their presence felt in this event this year and it turned out to be a spectacular one as our students made up of 2 senior and one junior team performed well. Our Junior Team 1 competing in their first ever debate did extremely well through the first seven rounds. The star debaters included Nada Abdelhalim, Mariam ElSafty, Halvor Tonsberg, Rashed Binhajji, Saleh Ali, Mario Matta, Abdulrahman Elsafty, Rawan and Retaj Shefeji, Iqra Nawaz, Qais Alalami and Randa Akl.

Although 10 of our debaters were participating for the first time ever in competitive debating, they held their own and quietly proceeded through the early stages thereby proving that our students have the caliber to debate with the best. KNES is pursuing every possible avenue to enhance participation in such events and to gain top position in debating in the near future.



Ambassador of Somalia to Kuwait and Deputy Dean of Diplomatic Corps Abdul Qader Ameen Sheikh hosted a farewell ceremony for the outgoing Iraqi Ambassador Mohammad Bahr Al-Uloum recently. Several diplomats, including Dean of Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Senegal to Kuwait Abdul Ahad Mbacke, attended the event. — Photos by Joseph Shagra





## THE PHARAOH BIKERS HOLD BLOOD DONATION AT JW MARRIOTT KUWAIT

JW Marriott Kuwait sponsored the 4th blood donation campaign for the Pharaoh Bikers Motorcycle Club, the first and only Egyptian motorcycle club in Kuwait, which was organized in cooperation with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank. The event took place on Friday, November 11th at the luxurious Al Jahra Ballroom. More than 200 bikers participated in this great initiative. The event started with a parade from Salmiya to Kuwait City, destination JW Marriott Kuwait where the campaign was held.

A special medical clinic was set up by the Central Blood Bank to allow the bikers to donate blood while also giving them the opportunity to undergo some basic health checks, including blood pressure. The blood bank was able to collect more than 70 blood units.

The Doctors from the KCBB explained that blood is always needed in Kuwait, and highlighted that they are pleased with the generosity and level of awareness of both locals and expatriates in the country. "We are very

active when it comes to charity and supporting local community" said Ramez Adel, the Media Officer of the Pharaoh Bikers.

"Corporate social responsibility comes in many forms and donating blood is a very valuable way of contributing to local communities," Ramez added. Commenting on the event, George Aoun, Cluster General Manager of Kuwait Marriott Hotels, said "sponsoring this great event reinforces Marriott's ongoing commitment towards supporting every aspect of the

local community and environment, while fulfilling its global "Spirit to Serve" initiatives.

"Through organizing and sponsoring blood drives, we aim to spread awareness in the local community on the importance of serving as a good example that upholds the value of the community as a whole. We strongly encourage all citizens and residents in Kuwait to donate to this vital cause whenever they can, as a mission to provide care to individuals in need, and save lives," Aoun added.



Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Tatang Razak and his spouse Marita Razak hosted an event to promote Batik, an Indonesian traditional textile heritage, at the Indonesian Embassy recently. A fashion show featuring Batik Muslim dresses took place during the event.



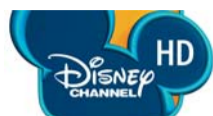
**MOVIES**

**ACTION**

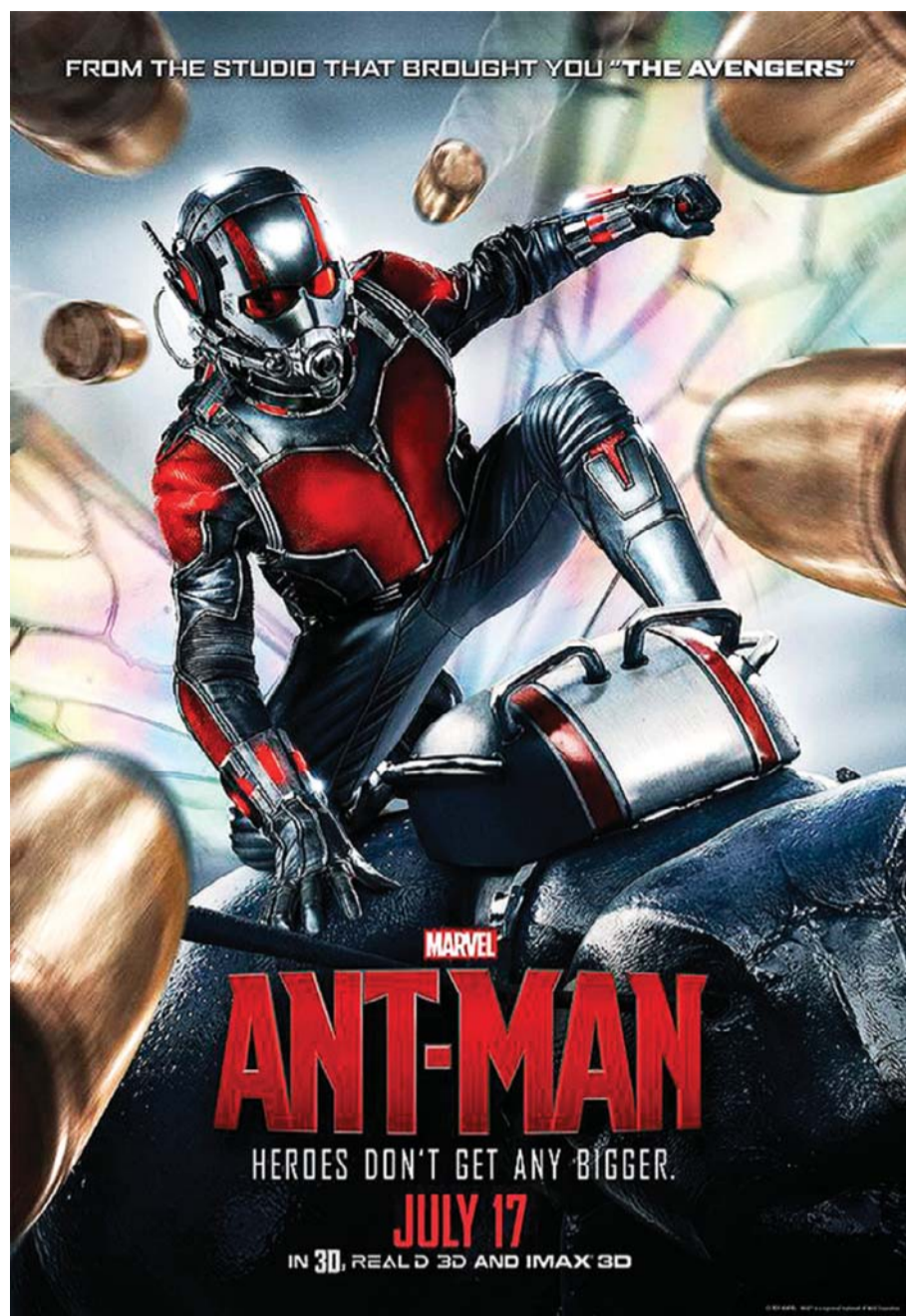
- 01:15 The Vatican Tapes
- 03:00 Inside
- 04:30 Ladder 49
- 06:30 Brick Mansions
- 08:15 Metro
- 10:30 Faster
- 12:15 The Mark: Redemption
- 14:00 Brick Mansions
- 16:00 Metro
- 18:00 Faster
- 20:00 Reign Of Fire
- 22:00 No Tears For The Dead

- 02:05 John Oliver's New York Stand Up Show
- 03:00 Workaholics
- 03:25 Ridiculousness
- 03:50 Ridiculousness
- 04:15 Key And Peele
- 04:40 Impractical Jokers
- 05:05 Ridiculousness
- 05:30 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
- 06:20 Tosh.0
- 06:50 Tosh.0
- 07:15 Catch A Contractor
- 08:05 Impractical Jokers
- 08:30 Ridiculousness
- 08:55 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol

- 18:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 19:40 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
- 20:30 I'd Kill For You
- 21:20 Love The Way You Lie
- 22:10 Disappeared
- 23:00 Steven Avery: Innocent Or Guilty?
- 23:50 Killer Confessions



- 00:10 Hank Zipzer
- 00:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 01:00 Violetta
- 01:45 The Hive
- 01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 02:40 Hank Zipzer
- 03:05 Binny And The Ghost
- 03:30 Violetta
- 04:15 The Hive
- 04:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 04:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 05:10 Hank Zipzer
- 05:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 06:00 Violetta
- 06:45 The Hive
- 06:50 Mouk
- 07:00 Jessie
- 07:25 Jessie
- 07:50 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 08:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 08:20 Liv And Maddie
- 08:45 Bunk'd
- 09:10 Austin & Ally
- 09:35 Shake It Up
- 10:00 A.N.T. Farm
- 10:25 A.N.T. Farm
- 10:50 That's So Raven
- 11:15 That's So Raven
- 11:40 Good Luck Charlie
- 12:05 Good Luck Charlie
- 12:30 Jessie
- 12:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 13:00 The 7D
- 13:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 13:40 Hank Zipzer
- 14:05 Star Darlings
- 14:10 Elena Of Avalor
- 14:35 Elena Of Avalor
- 15:00 Dog With A Blog
- 15:25 Jessie
- 15:50 Rolling To The Ronks
- 16:15 Hank Zipzer
- 16:40 Bunk'd
- 17:05 Star Darlings
- 17:10 Gravity Falls
- 17:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 18:25 Descendants Wicked World
- 18:30 Liv And Maddie
- 18:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 19:00 Jessie
- 19:25 Star Darlings
- 19:30 Best Friends Whenever
- 19:55 Descendants Wicked World
- 20:00 Dog With A Blog
- 20:25 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 20:30 Jessie
- 20:55 Liv And Maddie
- 21:20 Austin & Ally
- 22:10 Girl Meets World
- 22:35 H2O: Just Add Water
- 23:00 Binny And The Ghost
- 23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 23:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



**ANT-MAN ON OSN MOVIES HD**

- 13:00 The Hive
- 13:10 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 13:15 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 13:45 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 14:15 Henry Hugglemonster
- 14:30 Doc McStuffins
- 15:00 Sofia The First
- 15:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 16:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 16:30 Doc McStuffins
- 17:00 The Lion Guard
- 17:30 PJ Masks
- 18:00 Sofia The First
- 18:30 Goldie & Bear
- 19:00 Miles From Tomorrow
- 19:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 20:00 Doc McStuffins
- 20:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 21:00 PJ Masks
- 21:30 The Lion Guard
- 22:00 Sofia The First

- Much Everything
- 20:45 Mighty Med
- 21:10 Pickle And Peanut
- 21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 21:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy
- 22:10 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister
- 22:35 Booster
- 23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA

- 09:00 5 Star Family Reunion
- 10:00 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
- 10:55 Keep It In The Family
- 11:50 The Chase
- 12:45 Emmerdale
- 13:15 Coronation Street
- 13:45 Coronation Street
- 14:15 Keep It In The Family
- 15:10 The Chase
- 16:00 Broadchurch
- 16:55 Doc Martin
- 17:50 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
- 18:45 Emmerdale
- 19:15 Coronation Street
- 19:45 Coronation Street
- 20:10 The Chase
- 21:00 Broadchurch
- 21:55 Doc Martin
- 22:50 Emmerdale
- 23:15 Coronation Street
- 23:40 Coronation Street



- 00:20 Street Outlaws
- 01:10 Gold Rush
- 02:00 Deadliest Catch
- 02:50 Railroad Australia
- 03:40 Fast N' Loud
- 04:30 Extreme Collectors
- 05:00 Deals, Wheels And Steals
- 05:30 How Do They Do It?
- 06:00 Deadliest Catch
- 06:50 Street Outlaws
- 07:40 Fast N' Loud
- 08:30 Gold Divers
- 09:20 Extreme Collectors
- 09:45 Deals, Wheels And Steals
- 10:10 How Do They Do It?
- 10:35 Gold Rush
- 11:25 Deadliest Catch
- 12:15 Railroad Australia
- 13:05 Deals, Wheels And Steals
- 13:30 Storage Hunters
- 13:55 Extreme Collectors
- 14:20 Alaskan Bush People
- 15:10 Gold Divers
- 16:00 Deadliest Catch
- 16:50 Fast N' Loud
- 17:40 Street Outlaws
- 18:30 Deals, Wheels And Steals
- 18:55 How Do They Do It?
- 19:20 Gold Divers
- 20:10 Storage Hunters
- 20:35 Extreme Collectors
- 21:00 Survive That!
- 21:50 Dive Wars Australia
- 22:40 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
- 23:30 Fast N' Loud



- 00:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 01:00 Ancient Aliens
- 02:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 03:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 03:50 World War II: Lost Films
- 04:40 True Monsters
- 05:30 America's Book Of Secrets
- 06:20 Cities Of The Underworld
- 07:10 Ancient Discoveries
- 08:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 09:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 10:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 11:00 World War II: Lost Films
- 12:00 Shaun Ryder On UFOs
- 13:00 Ancient Aliens
- 14:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 15:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 16:00 World War II: Lost Films
- 17:00 Shaun Ryder On UFOs

**ANIMAL PLANET HD**

- 00:50 River Monsters
- 01:45 Bondi Vet
- 02:40 Wild Animal Repo
- 03:35 Tanked
- 04:25 My Wild Affair: The Elephant Who Loved Too Much
- 05:15 Gator Boys
- 06:02 River Monsters
- 06:49 Wild Animal Repo
- 07:36 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:00 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:25 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
- 09:15 Wild Animal Repo
- 10:10 Weird Creatures With Nick Baker
- 11:05 Tanked
- 12:00 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
- 12:55 Bondi Vet
- 13:50 Wild Animal Repo
- 14:45 Gator Boys
- 15:40 Weird Creatures With Nick Baker
- 16:35 Tanked
- 17:30 My Wild Affair: The Elephant Who Loved Too Much
- 18:25 Swimming With Monsters: Steve Backshall
- 19:20 Lone Star Law
- 20:15 Tanked
- 21:10 Saving Africa's Giants With Yao Ming
- 22:05 Weird Creatures With Nick Baker
- 23:00 Lone Star Law
- 23:55 Gator Boys

**Discovery Family**

- 00:30 Redesign My Brain
- 01:20 Kids Do The Craziest Things
- 01:45 Kids Do The Craziest Things
- 02:10 Pick A Puppy
- 02:35 Pick A Puppy
- 03:00 Untamed & Uncut
- 03:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 04:40 How It's Made
- 05:05 How It's Made
- 05:30 Dirty Jobs
- 06:20 Mythbusters
- 06:50 Kids vs Film
- 07:25 Doki
- 07:50 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
- 08:40 How It's Made
- 09:05 How It's Made
- 09:30 Redesign My Brain
- 10:20 Mythbusters
- 11:10 Dirty Jobs
- 12:00 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
- 12:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 13:40 How It's Made
- 14:05 How It's Made
- 14:30 Dirty Jobs
- 15:20 Mythbusters
- 16:10 Kids vs Film
- 16:35 Doki
- 17:00 Playhouse Masters
- 17:50 Guinness World Records Smashed New Zealand

**BBC FIRST**

- 00:30 The Collection
- 01:25 Class
- 02:25 Silent Witness
- 03:20 Mad Dogs
- 04:10 Death In Paradise
- 05:05 Call The Midwife
- 06:00 Eastenders
- 06:30 Casualty
- 07:20 Death In Paradise
- 08:15 Father Brown
- 09:05 The Musketeers
- 10:00 Call The Midwife
- 10:50 Death In Paradise
- 11:45 Father Brown
- 12:35 The Musketeers
- 13:30 Call The Midwife
- 14:20 Death In Paradise
- 15:20 Father Brown
- 16:10 The Musketeers
- 17:05 Call The Midwife
- 18:00 Doctors
- 18:30 Doctors
- 19:05 Father Brown
- 20:00 One Of Us
- 21:00 Ripper Street
- 21:55 Silent Witness
- 22:50 Mad Dogs
- 23:40 Doctors



**REIGN OF FIRE ON OSN MOVIES ACTION**

**crime & investigation network**

- 00:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
- 01:00 Gangsters: America's Most Evil
- 02:00 Born To Kill
- 03:00 Gangs Of Britain...
- 04:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
- 05:00 Gangsters: America's Most Evil
- 06:00 Born To Kill
- 07:00 The First 48
- 08:00 Beyond Scared Straight
- 09:00 Homicide Hunter
- 10:00 The First 48
- 11:00 It Takes A Killer
- 11:30 Frenemies
- 12:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
- 13:00 Britain's Biggest Heists
- 14:00 Beyond Scared Straight
- 15:00 Homicide Hunter
- 16:00 It Takes A Killer
- 16:30 Frenemies
- 17:00 The First 48
- 18:00 Britain's Biggest Heists
- 19:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
- 20:00 Beyond Scared Straight
- 21:00 It Takes A Killer
- 21:30 Frenemies
- 22:00 Homicide Hunter
- 23:00 The Jail: 60 Days In

- 18:15 Guinness World Records Smashed New Zealand
- 18:40 Unchained Reaction
- 19:30 How It's Made
- 19:55 How It's Made
- 20:20 Mythbusters
- 21:10 Playhouse Masters
- 22:00 Guinness World Records Smashed New Zealand
- 22:50 Untamed & Uncut
- 23:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor



- 00:40 Six Degrees Of Murder
- 01:30 Dates From Hell
- 01:55 Dates From Hell
- 02:20 Killer Instinct With Chris Hansen
- 03:10 Behind Closed Doors: Shocking Secrets
- 04:00 Six Degrees Of Murder
- 04:48 I Almost Got Away With It
- 05:36 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
- 06:24 I'd Kill For You
- 07:12 Love The Way You Lie
- 08:00 Evil Online
- 08:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 09:40 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
- 10:30 I'd Kill For You
- 11:20 Nowhere To Hide
- 12:10 Evil Online
- 13:00 Evil Online
- 13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 14:40 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
- 15:30 I'd Kill For You
- 16:20 Love The Way You Lie
- 17:10 Your Number's Up
- 18:00 Evil Online

**Disney Junior**

- 00:00 Doc McStuffins
- 00:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 00:35 Zou
- 00:50 Loopdidoo
- 01:05 Art Attack
- 01:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 01:45 Calimero
- 02:00 Zou
- 02:15 Loopdidoo
- 02:30 Art Attack
- 03:00 Calimero
- 03:15 Zou
- 03:30 Loopdidoo
- 03:45 Art Attack
- 04:10 Henry Hugglemonster
- 04:20 Calimero
- 04:45 Loopdidoo
- 05:00 Art Attack
- 05:25 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:35 Calimero
- 05:50 Zou
- 06:00 Loopdidoo
- 06:15 Art Attack
- 06:35 Henry Hugglemonster
- 06:50 Calimero
- 07:00 Zou
- 07:20 Loopdidoo
- 07:35 Art Attack
- 08:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 08:30 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 09:00 The Lion Guard
- 09:30 Miles From Tomorrow
- 09:40 Goldie & Bear
- 10:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 10:10 Doc McStuffins
- 10:30 PJ Masks
- 10:40 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 11:00 Sofia The First
- 11:30 Doc McStuffins
- 12:00 Goldie & Bear
- 12:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates

- 22:30 Sofia The First
- 23:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 23:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse



- 06:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 06:25 K.C. Undercover
- 06:50 The 7D
- 07:00 Phineas And Ferb
- 07:15 Atomic Puppet
- 07:40 Danger Mouse
- 07:50 Counterfeit Cat
- 08:05 Future Worm
- 08:10 Gravity Falls
- 08:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 09:00 Supa Strikas
- 09:25 Supa Strikas
- 09:50 Danger Mouse
- 10:20 Annedroids
- 10:45 Annedroids
- 11:10 Counterfeit Cat
- 11:35 K.C. Undercover
- 12:00 K.C. Undercover
- 12:30 Gravity Falls
- 12:55 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 13:20 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 13:45 Phineas And Ferb
- 14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 14:15 Supa Strikas
- 14:40 Supa Strikas
- 15:05 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 15:30 Danger Mouse
- 15:55 Kirby Buckets
- 16:25 K.C. Undercover
- 16:50 Annedroids
- 17:15 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 17:40 K.C. Undercover
- 18:05 Future Worm
- 18:10 Gravity Falls
- 18:35 Counterfeit Cat
- 19:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 19:25 Supa Strikas
- 19:55 K.C. Undercover
- 20:20 Gamer's Guide To Pretty

**COMEDY CENTRAL**

- 00:00 Another Period
- 00:25 IdiotSitter
- 00:50 Chappelle's Show
- 01:15 Tosh.0
- 01:40 The Daily Show - Global Edition

- 18:00 Ancient Aliens
- 19:00 Ancient Aliens
- 20:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 21:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 22:00 World War II: Lost Films
- 23:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate



- 00:20 Aussie Pickers
- 01:10 Storage Wars
- 01:35 Storage Wars
- 02:00 Storage Wars
- 02:25 Storage Wars Miami
- 02:50 Leupu And Pitbull
- 03:40 American Restoration
- 04:30 Pawn Stars
- 05:00 Billion Dollar Wreck
- 06:00 Ice Road Truckers
- 06:50 American Pickers
- 07:40 Pawn Stars
- 08:05 Pawn Stars
- 08:30 Storage Wars Texas
- 08:55 American Restoration
- 09:45 Ultimate Wheels
- 10:35 Shipping Wars
- 11:00 Shipping Wars
- 11:25 Billion Dollar Wreck
- 12:15 Swamp People
- 13:05 Ax Men
- 13:55 Ozy & Jack's World Detour
- 14:45 Aussie Pickers
- 15:35 Pawn Stars
- 16:00 American Pickers
- 16:50 Storage Wars
- 17:15 Storage Wars Miami
- 17:40 Mountain Men
- 18:30 Billion Dollar Wreck
- 19:20 American Pickers
- 20:10 Pawn Stars
- 20:35 Pawn Stars
- 21:00 Mountain Men
- 21:50 Fought In Fire
- 22:40 Ozy & Jack's World Detour
- 23:30 Alone

- 04:45 Ultimate Survival Alaska
- 05:40 Don't Tell My Mother
- 06:05 Don't Tell My Mother
- 06:35 Live Free Or Die
- 07:30 Big Fix Alaska
- 08:25 America's Lost Treasures
- 09:20 Ultimate Survival Alaska
- 10:15 Big Fish, Texas
- 11:10 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
- 12:05 Air Crash Investigation
- 13:00 America's Lost Treasures
- 14:00 Big Fix Alaska
- 15:00 Live Free Or Die
- 16:00 Big Fish, Texas
- 17:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
- 18:00 Air Crash Investigation
- 19:00 Live Free Or Die
- 20:00 Big Fix, Texas
- 20:50 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
- 21:40 Air Crash Investigation
- 22:30 Live Free Or Die
- 23:20 Don't Tell My Mother
- 23:45 Don't Tell My Mother

**MOVIES HD**

- 01:45 Spooks: The Greater Good
- 03:30 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part I
- 05:30 Barely Lethal
- 07:15 Spooks: The Greater Good
- 09:00 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part I
- 11:00 The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out Of Water
- 13:00 McFarland, USA
- 15:15 50 To 1
- 17:15 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part II
- 19:45 Ant-Man
- 22:00 Vacation
- 23:45 Focus

**COMEDY**

- 00:00 A Long Way Down
- 02:00 Blue Streak
- 04:00 Vampire Dog
- 06:00 Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey
- 08:00 All About Steve
- 10:00 Vampire Dog
- 12:00 A Madea Christmas
- 14:00 The Bad News Bears (2005)
- 16:00 All About Steve
- 18:00 Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2
- 20:00 Hits
- 22:00 The Starving Games

**FIRST HD**

**COMEDY**

- 00:00 Uncle Buck
- 00:30 Scrubs
- 01:00 Scrubs
- 01:30 Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll
- 02:00 Modern Family
- 02:30 You're The Worst
- 03:00 2 Broke Girls
- 03:30 The Simpsons
- 04:00 Fresh Off The Boat
- 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 05:30 George Lopez
- 06:00 Galavant
- 06:30 Community
- 07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 08:00 Fresh Off The Boat
- 08:30 George Lopez
- 09:00 2 Broke Girls
- 09:30 Crowded
- 10:00 Modern Family
- 10:30 Community
- 11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 12:00 Galavant
- 12:30 Fresh Off The Boat
- 13:00 George Lopez
- 13:30 Community
- 14:00 The Simpsons
- 14:30 Crowded
- 15:00 Modern Family
- 15:30 Scrubs
- 16:00 Scrubs
- 16:30 Galavant
- 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 18:00 2 Broke Girls
- 18:30 The Simpsons
- 19:00 Crowded
- 19:30 Modern Family
- 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 21:00 Scrubs
- 21:30 Scrubs
- 22:00 Ballers
- 22:30 Ballers
- 23:00 You're The Worst
- 23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD**

- 00:10 To Catch A Smuggler
- 01:00 Big Fix Alaska
- 02:00 Big Fish, Texas
- 02:55 Explorer
- 03:50 To Catch A Smuggler

Based on the bestselling book by Nick Hornby, the writer of 'High Fidelity' & 'About A Boy'



- 00:00 Mystery Diners
- 00:30 Mystery Diners
- 01:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 01:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 02:00 Man Fire Food
- 02:30 Man Fire Food
- 03:00 Chopped
- 04:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 05:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
- 05:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
- 06:00 Chopped
- 07:00 Barefoot Contessa
- 07:30 Barefoot Contessa
- 08:00 The Kitchen
- 09:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 09:30 Anna Olson: Bake
- 10:00 Chopped
- 11:00 Guy's Big Bite
- 11:30 Guy's Big Bite
- 12:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 12:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 13:00 Man Fire Food
- 13:30 Man Fire Food
- 14:00 Chopped
- 15:00 The Kitchen
- 16:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 16:30 Anna Olson: Bake
- 17:00 Chopped
- 18:00 Iron Chef America
- 19:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 19:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 20:00 Man Finds Food
- 20:30 Man Finds Food
- 21:00 Man v Food
- 21:30 Man v Food
- 22:00 Iron Chef America
- 23:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 23:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives

Life is looking up.



**A LONG WAY DOWN**

Every friendship has its ups and downs.

**A LONG WAY DOWN ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY**



# CLASSIFIEDS



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2016

**Kuwait Times**  
 Now you can browse  
[www.kuwaittimes.net](http://www.kuwaittimes.net)  
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

### KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (17/11/2016 TO 23/11/2016)

Time	Programme	Time	Programme	Time	Programme
12:30 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	12:30 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	12:30 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM
2:15 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	3:00 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	3:00 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM
4:45 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	5:45 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	5:45 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM
8:45 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	8:45 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	8:30 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM
10:30 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	11:30 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM	11:15 PM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM
12:15 AM	FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM				

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**I, Pedro Domingo Dias s/o** Domingo Dias holder of Indian Passport No. G3441110 and Civil ID No. 268113001912 has changed my name Pedro Domingo Diasy to Pedro Domingo Dias herein after in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of Pedro Domingo Dias. **(C 5233)**

**I, NAZEEMA MOHAMMED** holder of Indian Passport No. L-4904837 and Civil ID No. 278022005597 has changed my name from NAZEEMA MOHAMMED to NASIMUNNISA hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of NASIMUNNISA. **(C 5234)**  
**17-11-2016**

**I, Jujar Abbasbhai** Dahodwala s/o Abbasbhai Dahodwala holder of Indian Passport No. H8465779 and Civil ID No. 268111401621 has change my surname to Jujar Abbasbhai Dalrotiwala here in after. In all my dealings and documents I will be known by name of Jujar Abbasbhai Dalrotiwala. **(C 5231)**

**I, Shaik Mushtaq s/o Shaik** Yousuf holder of Indian Passport No. G3955355 Civil ID No. 276030802124 has changed my name to Shaik Mukthar herein after in all my dealings and documents. I will be known by name of Shaik Mukthar s/o Shaik Yousuf. **(C 5232)**  
**16-11-2016**

### An Online E-commerce Company in Kuwait searching for

## Web Administrator

**Conditions:**

- 1- At least Five to Ten years Experience in the field of online E-commerce
- 2- Arabic and/or English language skills (written and Talking)
- 3- Educated with degree
- 4- Valid driver's license is a must with car
- 5- Transferable Residence

Please send your CVs to [onlinemarket272@gmail.com](mailto:onlinemarket272@gmail.com)

## EMERGENCY 112

**Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988**

PRAYER TIMINGS	
<b>Fajr:</b>	<b>04:51</b>
<b>Shorook</b>	<b>06:13</b>
<b>Duhr:</b>	<b>11:33</b>
<b>Asr:</b>	<b>14:32</b>
<b>Maghrib:</b>	<b>16:52</b>
<b>Isha:</b>	<b>18:12</b>

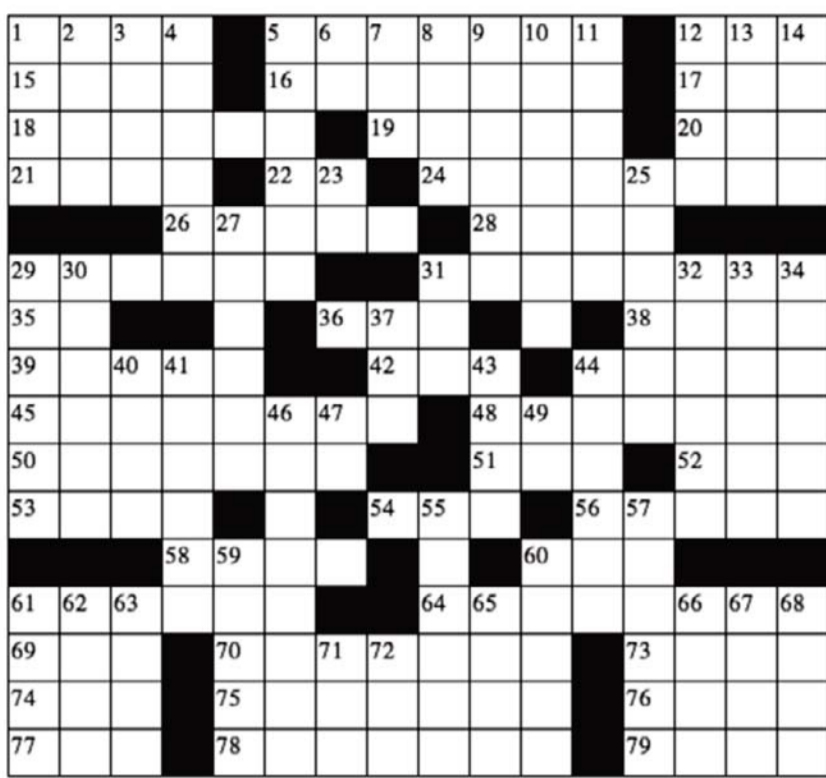
## Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

### DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Thursday 17/11/2016		Departure Flights on Thursday 17/11/2016	
Airlines	Fit	Airlines	Fit
KLM	411	KAC	417
JZR	267	THY	773
JZR	539	SAI	442
THY	772	DLH	635
KAC	102	AXB	396
MSC	411	ETH	621
QTR	1086	PGT	859
SAI	441	UAE	854
THY	764	KKK	6505
DLH	635	OMA	644
AXB	395	THY	765
PGT	858	MSR	613
ETH	620	JZR	306
GFA	211	ETD	167
UAE	853	QTR	1077
KAC	354	LMU	511
KAC	332	MSC	502
THY	770	QTR	1087
KAC	364	FEG	954
KAC	206	JZR	560
KAC	346	FDB	070
BAW	157	KAC	153
PAL	668	THY	771
KAC	204	JZR	164
FDB	5061	Dubai	165
QTR	8511	Doha	165
FDB	053	Rome	238
IAW	155	Amman	541
KAC	302	Cairo	212
UAE	855	Bahrain	773
KAC	382	Jeddah	787
IRA	667	Dubai	5062
ETD	301	Paris	563
ABY	125	Bangkok	411
KAC	352	Rome	156
QTR	1070	Amman	2000
FDB	055	Alexandria	054
SVA	512	Muscat	691
AVV	653	Dubai	156
IRA	673	Istanbul	743
GFA	213	Frankfurt	117
SYR	341	Bahrain	534
KAC	774	Dubai	8512
RBG	553	Doha	101
MSC	403	London	126
JZR	165	Sharjah	856
FDK	801	Dubai	668
MEA	404	Mashhad	671
IAW	157	Dubai	302
KAC	744	Abu Dhabi	778
FEG	953	Jeddah	056
JZR	561	Doha	1071
JZR	239	Riyadh	513
FDB	075	Ahwaz	672
UAE	871	Asyut	654
MSR	610	Beirut	501
AXB	393	Dubai	176
BON	101	Bahrain	155
KAC	564	Dubai	4115
KAC	788	Cairo	611
FEG	931	Dubai	076
KNE	231	Mumbai	
QTR	1078		
SVA	500		
FDB	059		
KAC	692		
KAC	414		
GFA	221		
KAC	542		
KAC	672		



CROSSWORD 1433



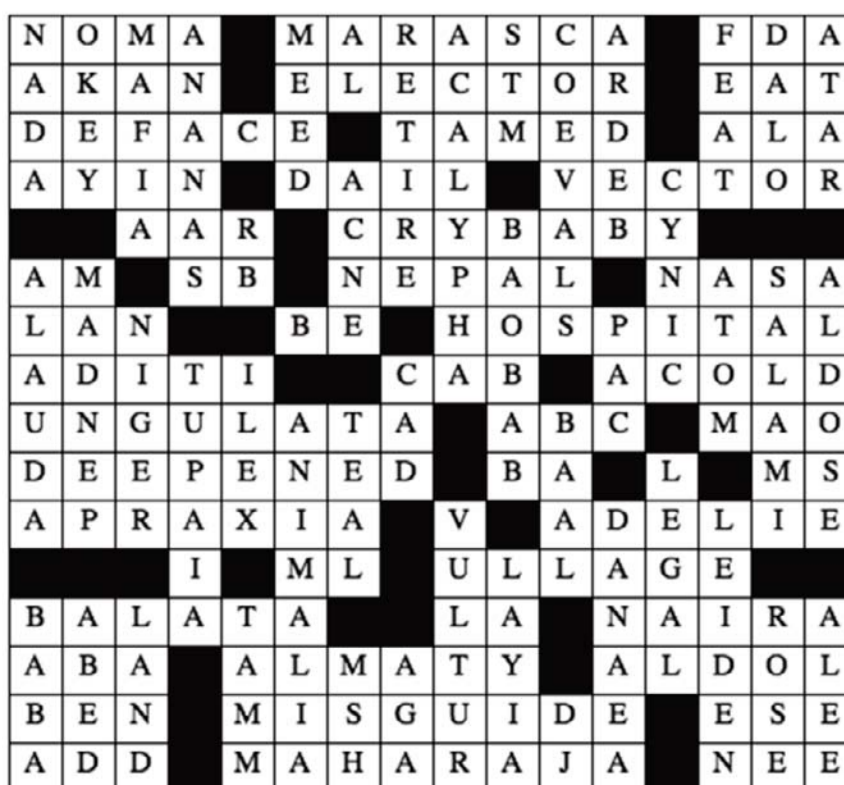
ACROSS

1. A fine grained mineral having a soft soapy feel and consisting of hydrated magnesium silicate.
5. A member of an Indian people formerly living along the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.
12. Surface layer of ground containing a mat of grass and grass roots.
15. The chief solid component of mammalian urine.
16. (Scottish) A strong dislike.
17. An accountant certified by the state.
18. United States comedian and film actor (1880-1946).
19. Mild cream-colored Dutch cheese shaped in balls.
20. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
21. An association of people to promote the welfare of senior citizens.
22. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
24. Capable of being corrupted.
26. A line spoken by an actor to the audience but not intended for others on the stage.
28. Harsh or corrosive in tone.
29. Situated at an apex.
35. Minor or subordinate.
36. A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
38. A sudden short attack.
39. A particular environment or walk of life.
42. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
45. A republic in northwestern South America.
48. Any of the enzymes that catalyze biological oxidation.
50. Utter a reproach to.
51. Being ten more than one hundred eighty.
52. Of or pertaining to a number system having 16 as its base.
53. Give a certain impression or have a certain outward aspect.
54. Perennial herb of East India to Polynesia and Australia cultivated for its large edible root yielding Otaheite arrowroot starch.
56. Any of the numerous plants of the genus Viola.
58. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
61. United States economist who wrote about conspicuous consumption (1857-1929).
64. Coarsely ground corn.
69. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
70. Leatherleaf ferns.
73. The capital and chief port of Qatar.
74. Being one more than two.
75. Of or relating to the heart.
76. A republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
77. A committee in the executive branch of government that advises the president on foreign and military and national security.
78. Surveying instrument consisting of the upper movable part of a theodolite including the telescope and its attachments.
79. (of a young animal) Abandoned by its mother and raised by hand.

DOWN

1. A soft porous rock consisting of calcium carbonate deposited from springs rich in lime.
2. An elaborate song for solo voice.
3. A facial expression of contempt or scorn.
4. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
5. Attack someone physically or emotionally.
6. A crystalline metallic element not found in nature.
7. The month following July and preceding September.
8. A rounded projection or protuberance.
9. (zoology) Relating to frogs and toads.
10. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
11. Relating to or characteristic of Arabs.
12. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
13. A translucent mineral consisting of hydrated silica of variable color.
14. A challenge to do something dangerous or foolhardy.
23. A bachelor's degree in religion.
25. Regarded with deep or rapturous love (especially as if for a god).
27. A mountain peak in the Andes in Bolivia (21,391 feet high).
30. A deep red garnet used as a gemstone.
31. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
32. A member of an Athapaskan people that migrated to Arizona and New Mexico and Utah.
33. German engineer (born in France) who invented the diesel engine (1858-1913).
34. An accessory or adjoining anatomical parts or appendages (especially of the embryo).
37. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
40. A river in central Europe that arises in northwestern Czechoslovakia and flows northward through Germany to empty into the North Sea.
41. Conforming with or constituting a norm or standard or level or type or social norm.
43. The ball-and-socket joint between the head of the femur and the acetabulum.
44. Relating to or characteristic of wooded regions.
46. Requiring two hands or designed for two people.
47. A state in the Rocky Mountains.
49. Being ten more than eighty.
55. A volcanic island (part of Campania) in the Tyrrhenian Sea at the north end of the Bay of Naples.
57. (prosody) Of or consisting of iambs.
59. Type genus of the Percidae.
60. A support that steadies or strengthens something else.
62. Armor plate that protects the chest.
63. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
65. Toward the mouth or oral region.
66. A genus of Mustelidae.
67. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
68. A body of (usually fresh) water surrounded by land.
71. The use of nuclear magnetic resonance of protons to produce proton density images.
72. Not divisible by two.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a time during which confidence and self-expression may be limited and disciplined. What you achieve now will prove to be lasting. This time could be seen as a kind of apprenticeship during which you learn much. You may find yourself succeeding and moving ahead by using your mind and thoughts. Also, communication and research in all forms could be a key area for career growth. Your life takes on a kind of mystical quality at the emotional and instinctive levels. Over the last few months, you may have collected quite a lot of antiques and heirlooms that others would like to have and that is what you do now. Plan a unique garage sale that will help you rake in some big bucks as well as get rid of some outdated items.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You feel a love of order and law-an appreciation for responsibilities and duty. You may be called on to help with a problem co-worker or perhaps a problem customer. Problems today are valued for the lessons they represent, rather than perceived as obstacles. You are at your most practical when it comes to working with others. If you are wearing a uniform, you are probably a police officer, and a good one. You know just what to do and can act without haste and emotion. Close relationships and other ties between people become a focus for much of your energy. New partnerships are entered into; old ones are renewed or else they are left behind. You love the earth and all its elements-you and a friend might arrange a future camping trip.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Taking care of business is a major theme this morning. You are happy to get into the swing of things. The lunch hour affords you a bit of time for shopping and before you know it, you hardly have time to squeeze into the elevator and return to your desk. At break there is a lot of chatter about where different families hide their gifts-one could even write a short book. There is a chance to understand those around you and to have a special time with someone you love. Marriage and other close relationships give rise to great expectations, as a new cycle gets underway in your life. This is a time to enjoy and appreciate your ties to others, and to seek and promote harmony in the interaction between people.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is a day for thinking and ideas. You may feel like talking a bit more than usual, exploring new ideas or getting happily lost in a conversation. There will be an urge to communicate and solve problems. Also, perhaps a short trip is in order. Your bright wit and talkative streak make you always ready for a conversation and today you jump right in where most of your co-workers fear to tread-careful. You make sense, but you should carefully make sure someone else picks up the reins so that you are not talking all the time. This will afford you some quiet time. Consider a weekend adventure to a concert. Perhaps some of the neighbors would enjoy going with you. This would also be a good time to shop.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You cleverly use that quick mind of yours to make wise choices and think things through. Career decisions are clearly set out for you at this time. You will find yourself lecturing or speaking to a group this afternoon. You have more than just the gift of gab. Your words and ideas can transport and enchant listeners, carrying them into a world as they wish it could be. Your inspiration will help change any unhelpful life situations to a most positive reality. You are the sort of person that writes captivating messages, letters, lectures and books. Your imagination and sense of what connects all of life is felt in your speech and the ways you communicate. People seem to enjoy hearing you speak and they have plenty of questions for you to answer.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You have an inner drive to improve and reform the conditions around you. Always ready to lend a hand. You have a feel for groups and any large-scale business or community project. You can be quite independent with a touch of the impersonal. With you, all persons get the same treatment. However, you may realize this and begin to work on a more personal approach with others. You may even find that you waste less time with hurt feelings than before. Consider the metaphysical rule that energy-follows-thought; dare to see yourself as strong, confident, capable, successful and possessed of the patience and stability to keep on moving in the direction of your dreams. Keep those dreams positive-your visions are tomorrow's reality.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

In the rush toward another new year, you will continue to look back on the past for inspiration and direction. It is the life experience of others and ourselves that guides us through our own life and you may be searching the past for information on management, historical systems and techniques. A new method of working can be taught to others that will save the company money and you and your co-workers the wasted time you navigate through at the end of each month. This evening you may notice an owl or some other creature is visiting your area. If you do a search on the internet you may find a site that would show you the different kinds of birds in your area as well as the sounds they make. See if you can identify the neighborhood birds.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your job could be with a company that is listed on the stock market. Now could be the time to vote on certain issues or purchase stock-a good choice either way. There is some sort of static electricity in the air that moves you to non-work conversations with co-workers. Whatever interesting thing occurs within the company for which you work, you still have a job to do today. Do not let yourself become so distracted that you forget your work for a period of time. You encourage others to be good stewards of time through your example. Celebrations are enjoyed at your noon break and later this afternoon. Travel to far-off or out-of-the-way places may be in the near future, particularly if you like adventures; start thinking about where. Happy birthday!



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

Your career or life-path may depend on your talent for responding and making something out of ideas, whatever is new and challenging. The business world may call for your ability to react and build on opportunities. This is a time for getting ahead, a time to enjoy your career and savor its rewards. The social graces pave your path to success. Your personal reputation and honor are of the utmost importance while visiting with vips this afternoon-you will put your best foot forward. The key spot in your personality is your mind-the world of ideas and communication. You will take the opportunity to present your ideas to higher-ups today. Unconventional and possibly eccentric but positive solutions to housing problems are available for you.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You are driven and passionate in your pursuit of change and inner growth. You are well advised to seek the advice of someone you trust when it comes to career matters. Things are happening, and your career or path depends upon your own desire to achieve. This is the perfect time to get ahead by taking action. This is a real time to concentrate on your goals. Your sense of responsibility will guide you and prove successful. Your career could assume a much more determined and solid form-a firm foundation. Your support system, family, home and those who give you nourishment, becomes more secure at this time. You are able to dispense with the unessential and develop what is most basic in your life.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You may feel you are in your element today-dealing and working with others. You know just what to do and can act without haste or emotion. You could be asked to lend your commonsense opinion to the development of some project. Circumstances may force you to stop your own project and lead the way or teach others. This is all short term and with patience, you will be able to get back to your own project in short time. You are highly praised for the concern and care you show to others. The afternoon should flow along much easier and without interruption. This evening you will do well in activities that include children, young people and your home and surroundings. You could feel real support and harmony from loved ones at this time.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Work is a bit sluggish today. Perseverance will see you through to quitting time. Close relationships take on more emotional depth, power and importance. Feeling cared for and needed is comfortable. You can become involved in special olympics, even if you have no expertise in sports, and that is what you seek to do now. You could volunteer to coach in the next special olympics and could sign up for a training program now. It may be pleasing to a participant to know that a friend or family member will enjoy volunteering. Home and family matters take on a greater importance than ever. This evening, you could be feeling more like sharing some time with your lover or with close friends. You are feeling reflective rather than expressive just now.

WORD SEARCH

SCUBA Diving

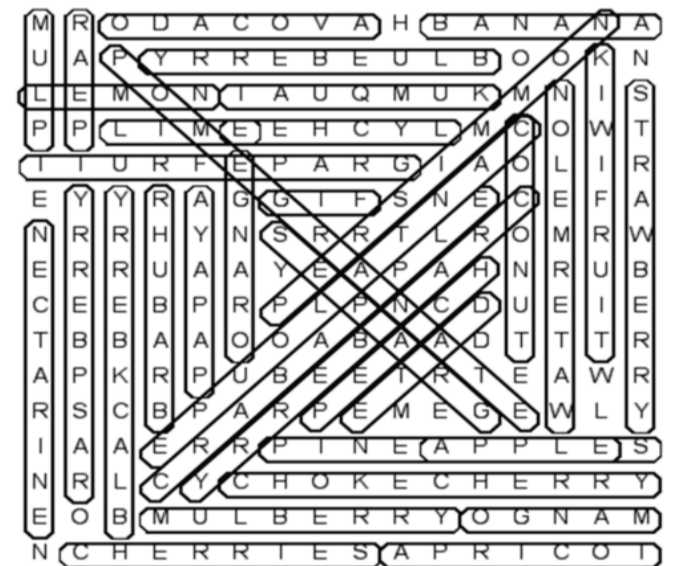
Find and circle all of the SCUBA Diving words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the meaning of the letters of SCUBA.



- |                 |               |              |               |             |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| AIR PRESSURE    | CURRENT       | HYPOTHERMIA  | RECOMPRESSION | TIDE        |
| ALTITUDE DIVING | DECOMPRESSION | LEEWARD      | REGULATOR     | TOXICITY    |
| ANOXIA          | DEPTH GAUGE   | LUNGS        | SCOOTER       | TRIMIX      |
| ATMOSPHERE      | DIVE COMPUTER | MEMBRANE     | SEA LEVEL     | UNDERSEA    |
| BAROTRAUMA      | DIVE FLAG     | MOUTHPIECE   | SHEARS        | UNDERSUIT   |
| BOOTS           | DIVE MARSHAL  | NARCOSIS     | SHOAL         | UNDERTOW    |
| BOUNCE DIVE     | DRYSUIT       | NEOPRENE     | SILICONE      | VALVE       |
| BUBBLES         | EDDY          | NITROGEN     | SNORKEL       | VISION      |
| BUDDY SYSTEM    | EMBOLISM      | GAS CYLINDER | SPEAR GUN     | VOLUME      |
| BUOYANCY        | GAS MIXTURE   | NITROX       | STROBE        | WATER       |
| C CARD          | GIANT STRIDE  | OCEAN        | SWIM FINS     | WEIGHT BELT |
| COMPASS         | HELIOX        | OXYGEN       | SWIMMING      | WEIGHTS     |
| COMPRESSOR      | HOSE          | PANIC        | TANK          | WETSUIT     |
| CORAL REEF      |               | REBREATH     | THE BENDS     | WINDWARD    |

Yesterday Solution

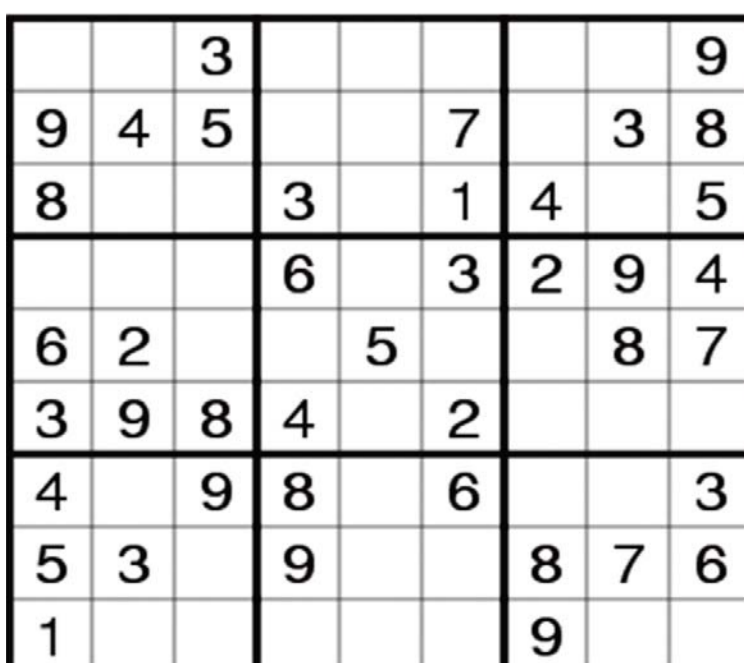
Fruit



- |             |            |             |
|-------------|------------|-------------|
| APPLES      | DATE       | ORANGE      |
| APRICOT     | FIG        | PAPAYA      |
| AVOCADO     | GRAPEFRUIT | PEACH       |
| BANANA      | GRAPES     | PEAR        |
| BLACKBERRY  | KIWIFRUIT  | PERSIMMON   |
| BLUEBERRY   | KUMQUAT    | PINEAPPLE   |
| CANTALOUPE  | LEMON      | PLUM        |
| CHERRIES    | LIME       | POMEGRANATE |
| CHOKECHERRY | LYCHEE     | RASPBERRY   |
| COCONUT     | MANGO      | RHUBARB     |
| CRABAPPLE   | MULBERRY   | STRAWBERRY  |
| CRANBERRY   | NECTARINE  | WATERMELON  |

The hidden message is: HONEYDEW MELON

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





For labor-related inquiries and complaints:  
Call MSAL hotline 128



**PHARMACIES**  
ON 24 HRS DUTY

**INTERNATIONAL CALLS**



**Hospitals**

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

**Clinics**

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khalidiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khalidiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
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Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

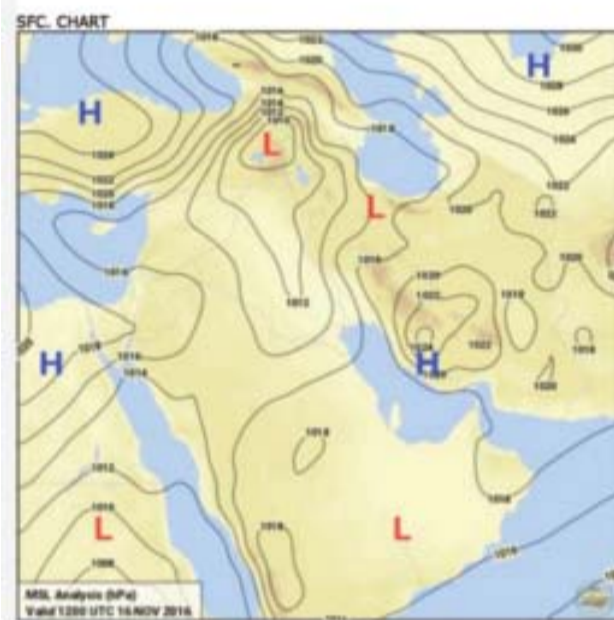
**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630  
Fax: (+965) 24348714  
www.met.gov.kw

**Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours**  
Issued 16/11/2016-19:00 LT UTC +3hr

**MIN Temperature 13 °C**  
By Night : Relatively humid with light to moderate south easterly to southerly wind, with speed of 12 - 32 km/h and some high clouds will appear  
By Day : Partly cloudy with light to moderate southerly to south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 35 km/h



Four-Day Forecast

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Expected Weather	partly cloudy	partly cloudy	Mostly sunny	partly cloudy
Min Temp °C	13	13	12	11
Max Temp °C	33	30	28	26
Wind Direction	southerly to south easterly	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	north westerly	north westerly
Wind Speed km/h	15 - 35	06 - 26	12 - 35	15 - 35

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

**Warnings & Weather Watches**

no warnings or weather watches

**Kuwait Forecast**

Station	MIN °C	EXP	Max °C
KUWAIT CITY	18		30
KUWAIT AIRPORT	13		32
ABDALY	11		32
BUBYAN	14		24
JAHRA	17		33
FALAKA ISLAND	16		29
SALMIYAH	21		25
AHMADI	20		26
JAL ALIYAH	15		32
QAROH ISLAND	24		28
UHM AL-MARADEM	23		29
NUWAZIB	15		30
WAFRA	13		32
MANAGISH	14		32
SALMY	15		32
MUTRIBA	13		34

**Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport**

Max Temp (°C)	31
Min Temp (°C)	11
Max Rel Hum (%)	47
Min Rel Hum (%)	16
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	18 W
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

**Prayer Times**

Sunrise	06:13
Sunset	16:52
Fajr	04:51
Sunrise	06:13
Zuhr	11:33
Asr	14:32
Sunset	16:52
Isha	18:12

**PRIVATE CLINICS**

<b>Ophthalmologists</b> Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor 25622444 Dr. Samy Al-Rabea 25752222 Dr. Masoma Habeeb 25321171 Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy 25739999 Dr. Mohsen Abel 25757700 Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl 25732223 Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly 25732223	<b>Plastic Surgeons</b> Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf 22547272 Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari 22617700 Dr. Abdel Quttainah 25625030/60 <b>Family Doctor</b> Dr Divya Damodar 23729596/23729581 <b>Psychiatrists</b> Dr. Esam Al-Ansari 22635047 Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan 22613623/0 <b>Gynaecologists &amp; Obstetricians</b> DrAdrian arbe 23729596/23729581 Dr. Verginia s.Marin 2572-6666 ext 8321 Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan 22655539 Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami 25343406 Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly 25739272 Dr. Salem soso 22618787 <b>General Surgeons</b> Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer 22610044 Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher 25327148 <b>Internists, Chest &amp; Heart</b> Dr. Adnan Ebil 22639939 Dr. Mousa Khadada 22666300 Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan 25728004 Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra 25355515 Dr. Mobarak Aldoub 24726446 Dr Nasser Behbehani 25654300/3	<b>Paediatricians</b> Dr. Khaled Hamadi 25665898 Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed 25340300 Dr. Zahra Qabazard 25710444 Dr. Sohail Qamar 22621099 Dr. Snaa Maarroof 25713514 Dr. Pradip Gujare 23713100 Dr. Zacharias Mathew 24334282 <b>Dermatology</b> Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University 23845955 <b>Dentists</b> Dr Anil Thomas 3729596/3729581 Dr. Shamah Al-Matar 22641071/2 Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed 22562226 Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer 22561444 Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan 22619557 Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash 22525888 Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan 25653755 Dr. Bader Al-Ansari 25620111 <b>Neurologists</b> Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri 25633324 Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan 25345875 <b>Gastrologists</b> Dr. Sami Aman 22636464 Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly 25322030 Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali 22633135	<b>Endocrinologist</b> Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman 25339330 Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari 25658888 Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr 25329924 <b>Physiotherapists &amp; VD</b> Dr. Deyaa Shehab 25722291 Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees 22666288 <b>Rheumatologists:</b> Dr. Adel Al-Awadi 25330060 Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah 25722290 <b>Internist, Chest &amp; Heart</b> DR.Mohammes Akkad 24555050 Ext 210 Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital 25339667 <b>Consultant Cardiologist</b> Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC 2611555-2622555 Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123
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Psychologists /Psychotherapists	Soor Center Tel: 2290-1677 Fax: 2290 1688	info@soorcenter.com www.soorcenter.com	Kaizen center 25716707	Noor Clinic 23845955	William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677 Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677
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# The indie child star who loves playing oddballs

He isn't quite a household name yet but, at the age of 19, child star-turned-teen heartthrob Asa Butterfield has built up a resume a Hollywood veteran would envy. The British actor has worked with Martin Scorsese and Tim Burton, starring alongside some of cinema's biggest names, including Samuel L. Jackson, Ben Kingsley, Emily Blunt and Anthony Hopkins. "I've never really gotten starstruck," he tells AFP ahead of the release of his latest project, sci-fi fantasy "The Space Between Us," co-starring Gary Oldman. "I've been very lucky to work with the people I have, but as an actor you need to be on a level playing field. Every actor I've worked with has been great at making me feel comfortable on set." Butterfield began acting at age eight, after a casting director saw him at his after-school drama club in north London. The movie that made Hollywood sit up and pay attention, 2008 Holocaust drama "The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas," earned Butterfield a British Independent Film Award nomination.

"Hugo," Martin Scorsese's 2011 love letter to the film industry, proved to be his big break, with his own lead performance earning him a Critics' Choice Award nomination for best young actor. He has since transformed himself into a poster boy for young adult drama through such films as 2013's "Ender's Game," where he played the titular role alongside Harrison Ford.

## Dream come true

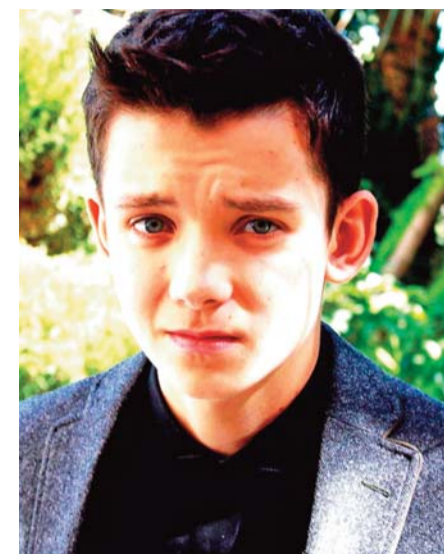
This year has seen him cast as the reluctant young hero of "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children," a performance which moved director Tim Burton to praise Butterfield's "special kind of sensitivity." For the young London-based actor, working with the legendary director was the fulfillment of a career-long dream. "When people asked me which director do you want to work with, I'd say Tim Burton. It's lovely having him welcome you somewhat into his imagination and ideas, which always blow you away," he says. "He is always very spontaneous. The way he works is very chaotic and you have to be on your toes."

Next up is "The Space Between Us," in which Butterfield plays Gardner Elliot, the first boy born on Mars who visits Earth for the first time at the age of 16, released in the US on December 16. Butterfield and co-star Carla Gugino ("San Andreas," "Batman v Superman") spent two weeks walking with weights on their ankles to get used to how a Mars resident might cope in the more tiring gravity of Earth. The character is like many Butterfield has taken on-an abandoned or orphaned child, an oddball who must negotiate a world he barely understands.

## Original roles

"I'm always trying to find roles which are original in one way or another, and stories which are original," he tells AFP. "I never really play the kid who's got the perfect life. Usually he's missing a parent or two." Like the young actors in the "Harry Potter" films, Butterfield has done his growing up in front of the camera but this indie child star has never been a recognizable celebrity. His more high-profile recent roles are beginning to change that as he enters adulthood, but he has his feet on the ground, and says he is more likely to be photographed cycling in London than cruising Beverly Hills in a Porsche.

"It hasn't really changed my life," he says of his career so far, before correcting himself. "Well, I suppose it has changed my life but I don't let it dictate my life." This month Butterfield began filming World War I drama "Journey's End," and there have been persistent rumors of superhero movies, although it's not a genre that particularly interests him. "I want to carry on acting. It's not the only thing I want to do though," he says. "I want to film wildlife documentaries up the Amazon or somewhere, behind the camera." — AFP



Asa Butterfield

## BEAUTY & THE BEAST IS A TALE AS OLD AS TIME - WITH SURPRISES

Director Bill Condon was only interested in turning Disney's animated classic "Beauty and the Beast" into a live-action film if he could use Alan Menken's Oscar-winning score. He remembers fondly when it came out in 1991 and how it not only solidified Disney's animation renaissance after "The Little Mermaid," but also helped revitalize the movie musical at a time when the genre was basically dead. The New York Times theater critic Frank Rich even called it, somewhat controversially, "the best Broadway musical score of 1991." It's fitting, then, that the twinkling instrumentals of Menken's prologue are the first thing you hear in the new trailer for the film, released Monday by Disney.

recreated and made real in magnificent detail - like the grand ballroom and Belle's yellow gown. But Condon was not restricted solely to drawing from the animated film.

The new movie also contains nods to Jean Cocteau's ornate black and white version from 1946, Condon said, as well as his own unique vision. "We went in with the idea that we were going to set it in a very specific time - the early 18th century in the French countryside," Condon said. They took pains to make sure the household staff resembled items - clocks, teapots, candelabras - from that time and place.

## More modern

Unsurprisingly, the big, splashy technical set-piece is "Be Our Guest," in which the anthropomorphized household items stage their own Busby Berkeley-inspired number to serve Belle a meal. It wasn't easy. "For us it was taking something that animation does easily - imagining dancing candlesticks - and making it real," he said. The film is not just a remembrance of "Beauty and the Beast's" past, however. They've made Belle even more modern than she was in 1991, when it was somewhat extraordinary to have the center of a Disney film be more interested in books than boys.

In this version, she's an inventor too, and being portrayed by an actress who is a humanitarian and a UN women's ambassador. "Having somebody who is devoting her life to those causes was invaluable as we started to reinvent this feminist character," he said. Also, Condon, whose films frequently deal with subjects pertaining to gay identity, is embracing that context here, too. He said the late lyricist Howard Ashman, who had AIDS at the time, closely identified with the Beast's story as "somebody who is cursed and whose curse is breaking the hearts of those who love him and the fantasy that this curse could be lifted."

Ashman died of AIDS related complications months before the animated film even hit theaters in 1991. "Right from the start it, in a very personal way, grew out of that tragic gay moment and then beyond that it's a musical," Condon said. "I don't want to give too much away, but I think there are actually a few more explicit moments that might surprise you." — AP



In this file photo, Director Bill Condon speaks during the photo call for the film Mr Holmes at the 2015 Berlinale Film Festival in Berlin, Germany. — AP

Set for a March 1, 2017, release, the film stars Emma Watson as Belle, Dan Stevens as the Beast and a robust supporting cast including the likes of Luke Evans, Ewan McGregor, Stanley Tucci, Emma Thompson and Gugu Mbatha-Raw. The film will feature re-recordings of Menken and Howard Ashman's songs, as well as a few new ones. "We talk about how technology is a reason for doing it 25 years later, but the fact is, too, that the genre itself has revived and people are more accepting. There's a wider audience for just the joy of breaking out into song," said Condon, who also wrote and directed "Dreamgirls." "It feels like the audience has caught up again."

Indeed, interest in the project is extraordinarily high. In its first 24 hours online, the trailer garnered 127.6 million views - besting the first day trailer stats for both "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" and "Fifty Shades Darker" by over 13 million views. Anyone who has seen the animated film is sure to be struck by some familiar imagery in the trailer,

## Six years after 'True Grit,' another breakout for Steinfeld

Does Hailee Steinfeld know how good she is? It's a question writer-director Kelly Fremon Craig and producer James L. Brooks would often ask themselves after watching the young actress shoot a take while making their high-school comedy "Edge of Seventeen." "Jim and I would sit there and go, 'Holy god!'" says Craig. "And after we'd call cut, Jim and I would be staring at each other with our mouths open and she'd just be on her phone like she didn't even know she did something that great." Steinfeld, an Oscar nominee at 14, is having another breakthrough at 19. In Craig's much-lauded directorial debut "Edge of Seventeen," the young star of the Coen brothers' "True Grit" proves that she's matured into one of the finest (and funniest) actresses of her generation.

It's a comic and heartfelt coming-of-age movie in the John Hughes mode in which Steinfeld stars as Nadine, a Job-like high-school junior plagued by a series of embarrassments. She's a self-described "old soul" who resents her fellow high-schoolers as "mouth breathers"; she's equal parts narcissistic and self-loathing, and altogether witty, honest and original. "This was one big liberating role for me," Steinfeld said in an interview earlier this fall. "It was amazing to be able to express all of that because I feel like, in a way, I haven't really been able to before. This character is so much like myself."

Steinfeld was making a brief stop at the Toronto International Film Festival, where "Edge of Seventeen" (in theaters Friday) was the closing night film. It was brief because in between acting, Steinfeld is trying to become a pop star; in Toronto, she was in between concert stops, fresh from Radio City Music Hall, on a tour as the opening act for Megan Trainor. Music, she says, was always part of her plan. The transition was partly enabled by her singing turn in 2015's "Pitch Perfect 2." Shortly after its release, Steinfeld landed a record contract and put out her first EP, "Haiz," last November. Steinfeld, a pal of Taylor Swift's (she appears in Swift's "Bad Blood" video), has had some success;

her single "Starving" got up to no. 14 on Billboard.

## Scripture-quoting

"It's definitely something that requires going in headfirst and not looking back," says Steinfeld. "When you stand on that stage, it's you. It's me going out there and being vulnerable in front of a bunch of people and having fun. And it's scary because it's so different than having that protection of being a character." The irony is that Steinfeld, in character, is such a genuine performer and potent force of nature. That was first evident in "True Grit," Joel and Ethan Coen's Charles Portis adaptation in which she played the scripture-quoting, pigtailed Mattie. The Coen brothers searched and searched for an actress for the part before finding the then 13-year-old Steinfeld; she was the only one could handle Portis' ornately formal dialogue.

Steinfeld vividly remembers the Coens giggling at the spot-on precision of her audition. In her feature film debut, an uncanny command of language came naturally. "I would get the feeling that I was in it, that I had switched on. But I never got the feeling that I switched off," she says. "In a way I felt like I had control but at the same time didn't know where it was coming from." The experience of "True Grit" remains unmatched for Steinfeld, she says; rare are directors who so trust actors. She was among the youngest ever nominated, but after the Oscars, life more or less went back to normal.

## Dozens of teenagers

"I remember a lot of people telling me: 'Your life is about to change, so much is going to be different, blah blah blah.' After it all kind of settled down I was like: Nothing's different. I have no idea what people are talking about. I'm still me, waking up in the same bed," says Steinfeld, who grew up in Los Angeles. Her next film didn't come out for more than two years. She has since done Shakespeare ("Romeo & Juliet"), YA ("Ender's Game") and thrillers ("The Keeping Room"). But it wasn't until

Craig and Brooks, after auditioning a thousand other girls, that Steinfeld found her next great part.

"We almost didn't believe our eyes," says Brooks. "Suddenly we had a movie." With Brooks ("Terms of Endearment," "The Mary Tyler Moore Show") serving as her mentor, Craig set out to capture a more realistic view of high school, inter-



Photo shows Hailee Steinfeld, a cast member in the film 'The Edge of Seventeen,' poses for a portrait at the Park Hyatt Hotel in Toronto. — AP

viewing dozens of teenagers. But it all depended upon finding the right Nadine. "Hailee can just turn it on in a way that I've never seen anybody be able to do before," says Craig. "There's an effortless to it. At least it looks very easy for her, which in a way makes you feel like you're witnessing some type of magic." Her rapport with Woody Harrelson (who plays a sardonic teacher) is so good that Brooks says, "They'd be doing Tracy-Hepburn movies together the rest of their lives if he was younger." "I feel Hailee can work and make movies for the next 50 years," Brooks says. — AP

## Review

## Superb 'Manchester by the Sea' swells with emotion

It's hard to overstate the magnificence of Kenneth Lonergan's "Manchester by the Sea." His third feature following "You Can Count on Me" and "Margaret" is one that swells with the spectrum of human emotion. Humor, anger, cynicism and love all crash into one another to create an elegant composition of image and sound that is filmmaking and storytelling at its best. It's centered on Lee Chandler (Casey Affleck), who we meet as a quiet custodian in Boston. He fixes clogged toilets and leaking showers for the tenants and shovels and salts the same walkway day after day with mechanical resolve. He is docile but stubborn and seems to have a deep disinterest in people. He is alone, but not lonely and at night, he drinks and drinks and drinks.

There is rage festering under the surface for reasons unclear. All we have are carefully chosen glimpses of the past, when Lee surrounded himself with family and had spirit and life, but we don't know what happened to turn him into this shell. Then his brother Joe (Kyle Chandler) suddenly dies and he must return to his hometown to take care of his teenage nephew, Patrick (Lucas Hedges), a hot-headed but sensitive kid ill-equipped to deal with this tragedy. Lee's ghosts make the picturesque Manchester a cold and hellish landscape. Everything is a reminder of why he had to leave in the first place and the nerve is still exposed. At least in Boston, he didn't have to see people who knew. He just had to deal with himself.

## Gorgeous cinematography

There is no easy way to continue talking about the plot without mucking up the impact of the structure. Lonergan, who also wrote the script, allows the story to reveal itself to the audience, smartly weaving together past and present and building tension to a devastating crescendo midway through - enhanced by the gorgeous cinematography of Jody Lee Lipes and Lesley Barber's sophisticated score. Tissues are, unsurprisingly, recommended, but the film is packed with genuine wit and humor too, often when least expected. In this way, it feels like life, where fits of laughter sometimes are the only relief from shattering moments.

The film offers rich performances, too. Hedges, who had a small role in "Moonrise Kingdom," is beautifully affecting as a kid in flux - pushing the boundaries of the relationship with his reluctant guardian while trying to maintain a modicum of teenage normalcy. And, of course, there's the scene that has everyone buzzing - a raw conversation between Lee and ex-wife Randi (Michelle Williams) that will surely become a fixture in awards reels this season. And yet, it's really the small moments and characters that add up to the whole - C.J. Wilson as a family friend, Tate Donovan as Patrick's hockey coach, Josh Hamilton as Joe's lawyer, to name a few.

## Highest caliber

But in the end it is Affleck's movie. In some other version of the universe, the role would have been played by Matt Damon, who executive produced. Meaning no disrespect to the fine acting of Mr Damon, what actually transpired was the outcome that was always meant to be. Affleck sinks into Lee's deep sadness and anger with mastery - it is a career defining performance and deserving of all the accolades. I saw "Manchester by the Sea" at the Sundance Film Festival in January and again recently and was delighted to find that it not only held up, but is even more rewarding and affecting the second time around.

It is a film to be watched, re-watched, studied and celebrated as a singular tale of tragedy, grief and aftermath. The scope might be small, but do not mistake its impact - "Manchester by the Sea" is an epic American tragedy of the highest caliber. "Manchester by the Sea," a Roadside Attractions release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "language throughout and some sexual content." Running time: 137 minutes. Four stars out of four. — AP

## Steve Carell in talks to join 'Minecraft' movie at Warner Bros

Warner Bros is getting close to making the first big casting for its "Minecraft" movie: Steve Carell. Carell is in talks to join the ensemble of the studio's big-screen adaptation of the popular video game. Rob McElhenney is on board to direct the pic. McElhenney also penned the latest draft with "Wonder Woman" scribe Jason Fuchs. Warner Bros had no comment on the casting.

Warner Bros acquired film rights to the video game franchise in February from

Swedish developer Mojang AB and set up the project with Roy Lee through his Vertigo Entertainment production company, along with Jill Messick ("Mean Girls"). The game, which debuted in 2009, allows players to create their own avatars and build an environment using textured cubes in a 3D world as they battle nocturnal monsters. Multiple gameplay modes are available, including survival mode, creative mode, and adventure mode. The movie is set to bow on May 25, 2019.

In recent years, Carell has balanced high-profile commercial films like "Crazy Stupid Love" and "Anchorman 2" with prestige movies like "Foxcatcher" and "The Big Short." The latter earned Carell some of the best reviews of his career. Carell was most recently seen in Woody Allen's "Cafe Society" and recently wrapped production on Fox Searchlight's "Battle of the Sexes," where he played Bobby Riggs opposite Emma Stone, who played Billie Jean King. — Reuters



Steve Carell



In this Jan 23, 2016, file photo, filmmaker Morgan Spurlock poses for a portrait to promote the series, 'Eagle Huntress,' at the Toyota Mirai Music Lodge during the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. — AP

## 'Super Size Me' filmmaker brings restaurant idea to Columbus

The maker of the documentary film "Super Size Me" is preparing to test out a new fast-food restaurant concept in Columbus. Morgan Spurlock is planning a four-day, pop-up restaurant called "Holy Chicken!" beginning Saturday. He picked Columbus because it's known for its role as a national test market. Spurlock calls the concept a "mission-driven, farm-to-table, all-natural, TranspareLocalicious" (tranz-PAYR-eh-loh-keh-LISH-uhs) "chicken experience."

Spurlock's 2004 documentary was nominated for an Academy Award. The film chronicled the detrimental physical and psychological effects of Spurlock eating only McDonald's food for 30 days. He says "Holy Chicken!" features sandwiches and tenders made from natural, free-range chickens, as well as locally sourced and locally produced beverages. — AP



# Stairway to heaven: Iranian artist's wall mural turns heads

In a canyon walled by drab gray and brown high-rises, a ragged line of men, women and children hold red helium balloons, ascending a staircase that ends in a spiral at an opening in the roof, where a single giant balloon slips into the blue sky. Two people at the top lift their heads in wonder. Seen by thousands of eyes a day at one of Boston's busiest intersections, the giant outdoor mural by Iranian artist Mehdi Ghadyanloo is a stunning expression of optimism he hopes can lead to better understanding between his homeland and the United States.

The 76-by-70-foot mural, painted on the side of a building across the street from South Station, appears almost three-dimensional, as if the admirer can join the line and find out what great secret awaits above. "I wanted to create something hopeful, especially now you always see so much bad news from all around the world," Ghadyanloo said. "I think what we need as humans is hope to keep going and enjoy our lives."

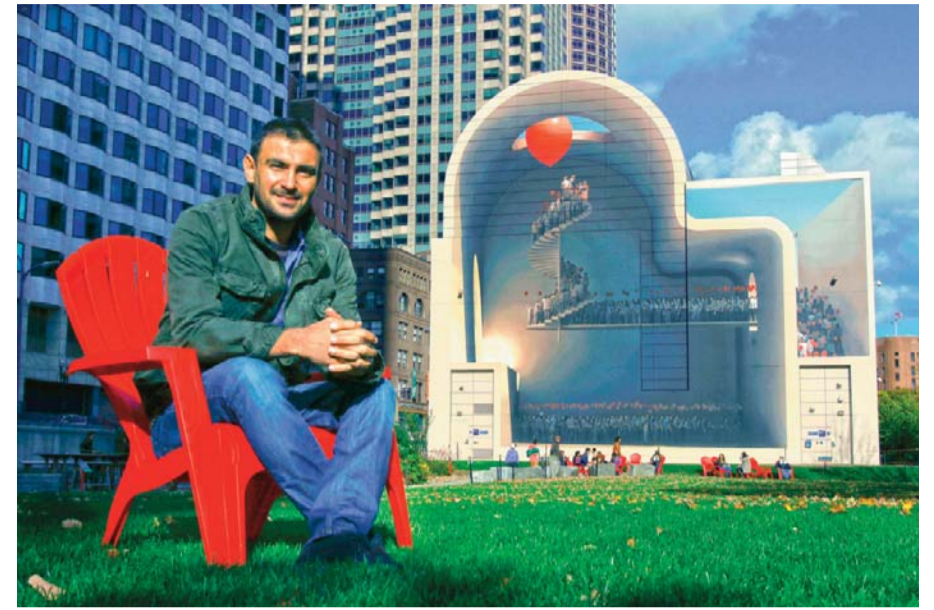
It's the fifth mural at the site commissioned by the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Conservancy

, which oversees a narrow, 1.5-mile-long strip of land created when the elevated highway that used to run through the city was torn down. Iranians and Americans don't really understand each other, Ghadyanloo said. The US has not had diplomatic relations with Iran since 1980, the year after 52 American diplomats were taken hostage at the US Embassy in Tehran. Ghadyanloo, 35, had not even been born yet.

But he wants Americans to know that despite political tensions, Iranians and Americans are not that different. They have dreams, they yearn and they love. His art, he hopes, can explain that. "I think art is the international language," he said. "It's like a bridge between all cultures." Ghadyanloo studied hospital administration at the University of Tehran but found it boring. He soon discovered art was where his passion and talent lay. After graduation in 2004, he answered an open call from the Iranian capital's beautification bureau to submit proposals for murals to brighten the city. He ultimately painted more than 100 between 2005 and 2012.

But he became weary of painting murals, until he was online and saw a previous mural on the same Boston building - which is actually an air intake for a subterranean highway - by the Brazilian twins known as Os Gemeos. "I said, 'This is the wall that can be next for me,'" he said. Across the ocean, Lucas Cowan, the Greenway's public art curator, was already an admirer of Ghadyanloo's work. "I'd been following him for about two years and when I contacted him through Facebook to see if he'd be interested in doing something in Boston I was thrilled he already knew the space," he said. "Spaces of Hope" will stay up for a year before being covered up by another mural, and Ghadyanloo accepts his work's fate. "At least I can have a little bit of a positive effect on everyone's life," he said. — AP

In this file photo, Mehdi Ghadyanloo, from Tehran, Iran, poses with his mural, 'Spaces of Hope,' on the Rose Kennedy Greenway in Boston. — AP



## 38<sup>TH</sup> CAIRO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



Egyptian actress Elham Shahin waves to photographers on the red carpet. — AP/AFP photos



Egyptian actress and TV personality Heidi Karam.



Jordanian actor Eyad Nassar waves his hand on the red carpet.



Egyptian actress Nahed El Sebai blows a kiss to photographers on the red carpet.



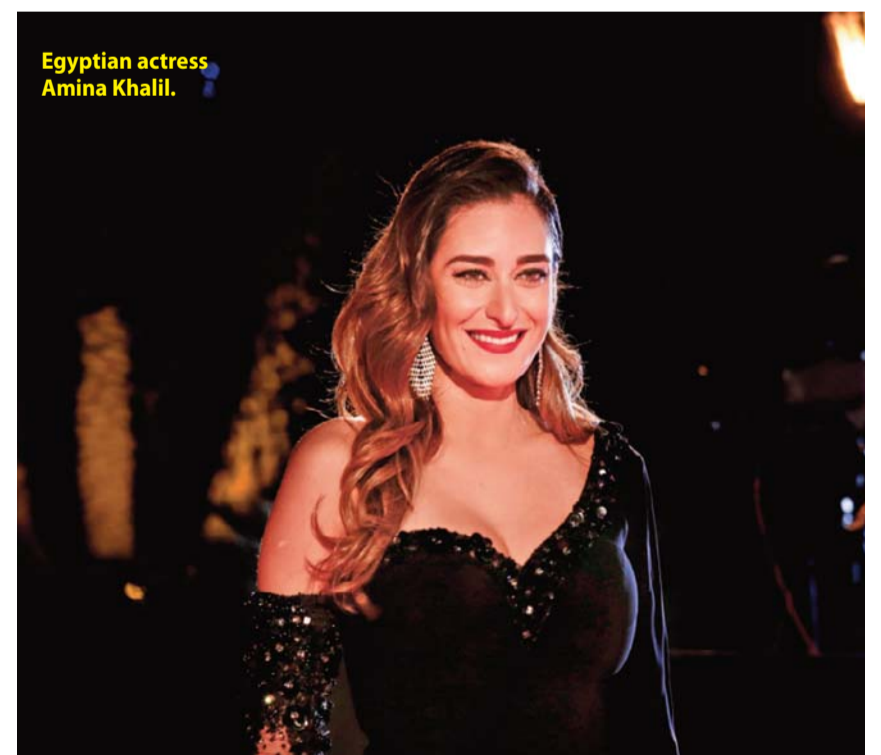
Egyptian actress Mariam Hassan poses for photographers on the red carpet.



Egyptian actor Faruq Al-Fishawi is seen on the red carpet.



Egyptian Lebanese actress Eman laughs on the red carpet.



Egyptian actress Amina Khalil.

## THE ROLLING STONES BRING THEIR EXHIBIT OF MEMORIES TO NEW YORK

British rock band The Rolling Stones celebrated the arrival of their travelling exhibition of memories and memorabilia in New York with a star-studded party on Tuesday. "Exhibitionism" features nine galleries of costumes, instruments and personal notes collected by band members Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Ronnie Wood and Charlie Watts over more than 50 years.

"There's a sense of nostalgia, but I think I walked away from it with how much the Stones mean to so many people. And that was kind of humbling in a way," guitarist Richards said of the exhibition. US television

host Jimmy Fallon and designer Tommy Hilfiger were among the party attendees on Tuesday. "Exhibitionism" is open in New York until March 12 before heading to Chicago, Illinois. — Reuters

(From left) Ronnie Wood, Keith Richards, movie director Martin Scorsese, Mick Jagger and Charlie Watts attend The Rolling Stones North American debut celebration of 'Exhibitionism' at Industria in the West Village in New York City. — AFP





FEATURES



Visitors to the American Museum of Natural History view a diorama of a shark swimming above a coral reef in the exhibit "Cuba!" Tuesday in New York.



A visitor to the American Museum of Natural History views posters in the show, "Cuba!"



A 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air is displayed in the exhibit "Cuba!" at the American Museum of Natural History.— AP photos

# American Museum of Natural History to host Cuba exhibit

The American Museum of Natural History is presenting a bilingual exhibit that explores Cuba's biodiversity and culture. The exhibition is called "Cuba!" and opens Nov 21. It was developed in collaboration with Cuba's National Museum of Natural History under an agreement signed in the summer in Havana. The wide-ranging exhibition includes photographs and quotes from Cubans, a display on the cultivation of tobacco, a film about Cuba's history and lifelike models representing the island's wildlife.

"What we wanted with this exhibit is to take people beyond the headlines to what they may not know or expect about Cuba," said curator Ana Luz Porzecanski, director of the museum's Center for Biodiversity and Conservation. "Cuba is much more than its wonderful music or Cuban cigars or old cars. Cuba is also a fascinating nation of remarkable biodiversity." The exhibit discusses a shrew-like mammal called an almiqui, which

secretes venomous saliva through a groove in its front teeth, and the bee hummingbird, considered the smallest bird in the world, among other creatures.

The United States and Cuba, a Caribbean island nation, are just 90 miles apart but had frigid relations for decades. They announced in December 2014 that they were restoring diplomatic ties, which were broken in 1961 after Fidel Castro took power in Cuba and installed a communist government. Porzecanski said the exhibit is not necessarily a result of the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between the nations although "that was helpful to our joint work." The museum, she said, has been collaborating with Cuban colleagues for more than 100 years. Esther Perez Lorenzo, director of the Cuban museum, said that cooperation will continue. The exhibit will run through Aug 13, 2017. — AP



A Cuban Carnival costume is displayed at the American Museum of Natural History exhibit, "Cuba!"



Green anoles rest on a branch in a terrarium at the American Museum of Natural History in the exhibit "Cuba!"

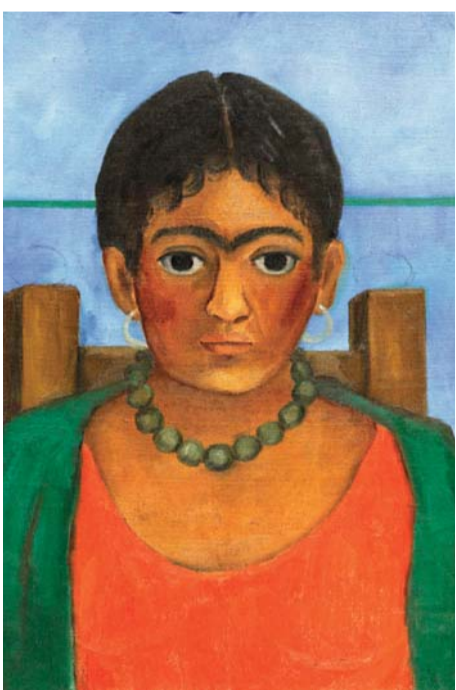


School children play dominoes at the exhibit "Cuba!"



A visitor to the American Museum of Natural History views a display of a tobacco harvest in the exhibit "Cuba!"

## Rediscovered Kahlo painting is going to auction in NY



This undated image provided by Sotheby's shows a rediscovered painting by Frida Kahlo that is going to auction in New York. — AP photos

A rediscovered painting by Frida Kahlo is going to auction this month in New York. The 1929 portrait, called "Nina con collar" or "Girl with necklace," will be part of Sotheby's Latin America: Modern Art sale on Nov 22. Its pre-sale estimate is \$1.5 million to \$2 million. Kahlo's husband, artist Diego Rivera, gave the work to her personal assistant in 1955, the year after she died. Until it surfaced over the summer, the only record of the portrait had been a black-and-white photo.

The work was painted before Kahlo and Rivera were married; they had no children, according to Axel Stein, Sotheby's head of Latin American Art. The unknown, unsmiling, wide-eyed model, perhaps 14 or 15 years old, appears to represent a young Kahlo. She is wearing the artist's jade necklace and possibly her earrings, said Stein. The subject also is depicted with dark, distinctive eyebrows resembling Kahlo's. The painting is about 22 inches by 18 inches. "I never imagined it would surface and turn out to be such a beautiful and warm painting," Stein said. "The blues are strikingly beautiful and intense," he said. "The vermilion is very, very sharp."

The owner hung it in a darkened bedroom in Sunnyvale, California, for six decades; because of her art expertise, she knew it should be kept out of the light. "The sun is the worst enemy of paintings," Stein said. "When she took it out it was beautifully preserved, like it was made yesterday." — AP

## Experts disagree on authenticity of new Van Gogh sketches

Art experts are disagreeing as to whether a book of previously unpublished drawings reported to be by Dutch master Vincent Van Gogh is authentic or fake. The book, "The Lost Arles Sketchbook," collated by eminent Canadian art historian Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov, is being published internationally after reportedly being found in the southern French city of Arles near a hotel where Van Gogh used to stay.

Welsh-Ovcharov said the sketches appeared in an account book belonging to Mister and Missus Ginoux, owners of the "Cafe de la Gare," to whom Van Gogh gave numerous works. "I started to look through all the drawings and each one

had my fingerprint," she said, calling it an "OMG moment" at Tuesday's press conference in Paris.

According to the University of Toronto website, Welsh-Ovcharov has taught art history for 25 years and has created several Van Gogh exhibitions, including one at the Musee d'Orsay in Paris. However, Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum Director Axel Ruger says its experts have been aware of these drawings since 2008 and after examination they have repeatedly concluded that the previously-unknown sketches are complete fakes. The museum said the drawings don't reflect Van Gogh's development at the time. He says the drawings use original brownish ink when Van Gogh used only black or purple ink that only later appeared brown because of age. The museum also said its experts deemed the drawing style "monotonous, clumsy, and spiritless" with basic topographic errors.



Copies of the book titled 'Vincent Van Gogh The lost Arles Sketchbook' are displayed.



Art historian and Van Gogh specialist Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov poses with the book 'Vincent Van Gogh The lost Arles Sketchbook', during a press conference held in Paris, France. — AP photos

## Splash 'Into the Wild'

Winter '16 fashion show at Fashion Forward Dubai

Fashion explores the wild side of the urban lifestyle this winter. It's fascinating to know that within the urban landscape that we live in exists different people who represent varied aspects of fashion. This season the recently concluded Splash 'Into The Wild' show explored various trends that really captured the essence of the urban jungle dweller.

A highlight event at Fashion Forward Dubai, Season 8, the Splash runway was replete with artistic tree installations and all black background which set the mood for the incoming season. Keeping it in sync with the band's true style, the show was followed by an after-party.

The dominant trends featured at Winter '16 fashion Show for women were: Global Traveler- the 70's vibe is strong with long lines in rich spice tones like burgundy, burnt orange and teal. Be a glamorous nomad in pieces that highlight folklore and hand-crafted prints in suede and patchwork fabrics. Mix&Mix - Print on print in sporty elements is the all new rage and this trend is not for the weak-hearted. Think bright hues, mix and matched bold prints with embellished and very luxe details. Bombers jackets and pinafore are the key pieces in the line. Studio 54- The name says it all! All glam and fabulous dressed in sequins and shimmer. This trip down memory lane will leave of nostalgic of this roaring era

and the disco age. Metallics and shiny fabrics will rule the collection. All Black collection - The grunge inspired collection has an array of fabrics to experiment with. You will find leather, satin, silk georgette and spandex in key pieces like jackets, skirts, dresses and shirts.

The dominant trends featured at Winter '16 fashion Show for men were: Anti-fashion + future utility- As the name suggests this trend leans towards Normcore, clean lines and tone on tone looks for a more functional and practical approach to fashion. Oversized silhouettes, drop shoulder pieces are key in earthy tones like sand, black and olive. Tough 90's- This trend is DIY at its best. Flaunt your personal style and create pieces that is essentially you! Busted knee denims, DIY tracker jackets and tartan shirts are your staples which can be highlighted with grunge elements. Studio 54- This range is for the very dapper man who can carry of plush fabrics with Elan. Clean and sophisticated, the range is all about the glamour from the era and not exactly OTT. Outerwear is print heavy and luxe fabrics in key pieces like polos and blazers.

The collection presented on the runway will be available across all Splash stores in Centrepoint at Splash -The Avenues, Phase II and at Salam Mall- Salmiya.





TRAVEL



A general view of Osuna with the bullring where extras and technician of HBO TV series 'Game of Thrones' take part in shootings of the fifth season's episodes.



The bullring where extras and technician of HBO TV serie 'Game of Thrones' take part in shootings of the fifth season's episodes.



Extras acting in the series of the Game of Thrones leaving the bullring as film crews began shooting part of the fifth season of the popular US fantasy television series in the southern Spanish city of Osuna, delighting local authorities who expect a tourism boost. — AFP photos

## A touch of 'Game of Thrones' magic on small Spanish town

When the mayor of the small southern Spanish town of Osuna called Jesus Cansino to tell him "Game of Thrones" was coming to shoot part of season five, he wouldn't believe it. "She said, 'They're coming to film a series, I'm not sure you know it. I started laughing,'" says the 43-year-old town hall employee and long-time fan of the multi-award-winning series, sitting at a sun-drenched cafe. But it was no lie. Princess Daenerys Targaryen, her dragons and crew descended on Osuna's century-old bullfighting ring in October 2014 to film what is regarded as one of the season's best scenes, and the town nestled deep in arid Andalusia has not looked back since.

With Cansino now in charge of promoting Osuna to "Thronies", or fans of the series, visitor numbers have soared and foreigners are regularly seen wandering round the town of white-washed houses, monasteries and Roman ruins—once a draw mainly for Spaniards. In the first 12 months after the shoot, the number of tourists to Osuna shot up 70 percent, and while it slowed down in the second year, it was still up around 35 percent, says tourism councilor Rafael Diaz.

This compares to a 10 to 15 percent rise in years prior to Game of Thrones, a series so popular that shooting locations in Spain, Malta, Croatia and Northern Ireland have become a draw for "set-jettlers", who visit destinations seen in films or series. Review site TripAdvisor analyzed the number of people visiting pages dedicated to "Game of Thrones" locations between May 2013 and May 2015 and found that Osuna came top, with a 35 percent rise in interest, followed by Mdina in Malta.

**'Have to work on it'**  
The influx in Osuna has yet to change the fortunes of an 18,000-strong, mainly agricultural town surrounded by olive groves with 22 percent unemployment. But it has helped create jobs and put the town on the international tourist map—so much so that the local newsagent now stocks the Daily Mail, Bild and Le Monde newspapers. "A few years ago, there was just one company that did guided tours, now we have two and two others are in the works," says Diaz. The tourism office is now staffed with four employees rather than just one, and authorities have opened previously closed buildings such as the 467-year-old university, taking advantage of the visitor influx to show off the rest of the town. The local museum has also launched a permanent exhibition devoted to "Game of Thrones", complete with photos of the shoot.

And some restaurants and shops in town have capitalized on a series many in Osuna were once unfamiliar with. Teresa Jimenez, the bubbly 53 year old who runs the Casa Curro restaurant where actress Emilia Clarke celebrated her birthday during the shoot, has had to double her staff since then. With a wall adorned with pictures of the series' stars, she also has dishes named after the characters. "Gnomas", for instance, is a grilled cinnamon apple named after Tyrion Lannister because both the character and the piece of fruit are "small", she explains.

The allure of "Game of Thrones" will not last forever, though, and the town has to keep thinking up ways of attracting visitors



An employee arranging figurines from the series Game of Thrones.

in a bid to expand a tourism sector it hopes will bring more money in. "Many people think that when a film crew comes, money is going to fall from the sky," says Cansino. "But you have to work on it."

**'Hollywood' in Osuna**  
Plans are afoot to give visitors in the bullfighting ring a virtual reality headset with which they will fly through the air like a dragon, looking down on the natural sites around Osuna in the hope of getting them to visit those too. Cansino is also planning a national competition of medieval combat in the very arena

where Khaleesi was saved by her dragon. And as "Game of Thrones" crew descend on other parts of Spain for season seven, several towns have called Osuna for advice, like Zumaia in the northern Basque Country.

The tiny seaside town known for its unusual rock formations had already been overwhelmed by visitors after a popular Spanish film was shot there, Diaz explains. The prospect of Thronies descending on them had them positively "scared", he adds. Even well-established tourist destinations have reaped the benefits, such as Peniscola on Spain's eastern shore—the scene of Daenerys Targaryen's city of Meereen. "Game of Thrones" was a real gift for us," says Laura Hidalgo, spokeswoman for the city hall.

"From July 2015 when the film shoot was announced up to now, there have been more than 5,000 news items in the international press," she says—free publicity estimated to be worth more than 35 million euros (\$38 million). Back in Osuna, meanwhile, residents like to recall the time when actors like Clarke, Peter Dinklage and "the good-looking one"—also known as Michiel Huisman—walked through the streets. People would congregate outside their hotels like it was "Hollywood", recalls one resident. "It was great," says Dolores Padilla-Cuervo, 64, walking down the street dressed in colorful, flowery trousers. "And there's much more atmosphere now, more people from outside town." But as for the series itself... not so much. "It's very violent, a lot of war—not for me." — AFP



In this file photo provided by Stowe Mountain Resort in Stowe, Vt, shows the ski resort's new Adventure Center in the background dusted with snow from the season's first snowfall, with the Stowe Mountain Lodge in the foreground.

## NORTHEAST RESORTS INVEST IN SNOWMAKING, OFF-SLOPE ACTIVITIES

Before the ski and snowboard season gets cranking, here's a look at what's new at resorts around the Northeast.

### Snowmaking, snowmaking and more snowmaking

After a dismal snow season last winter with frequent warm-ups, resorts across the Northeast continue to invest in snowmaking to better cover trails, open earlier and stay open longer, and to do it using less energy. The New Hampshire-owned and operated Cannon Mountain, for example, expects to reduce energy consumption by about 30 percent with the addition of new snowmaking guns and upgrades to older ones, for a total of 479 guns. The project plus other maintenance cost more than \$5 million.

### World cup skiing returns to the east

The World Cup ski circuit is returning to the East Coast, after a 25-year absence. Vermont's Killington Resort will be hosting the women's giant slalom and slalom races on Nov. 26-27. Olympic and slalom world

champion Mikaela Shiffrin is among the 90 to 100 racers from about 20 nations expected to compete. To prepare for the race, Killington started snowmaking on Oct. 10.

### More terrain

In its first major expansion in more than 30 years, New Hampshire's Waterville Valley Resort has added 45 acres and cut 10 new trails that will be served by a chair lift. The Green Peak expansion includes beginner, intermediate and advanced terrain.

### Lodging

Burke Mountain Resort in northern Vermont has its first resort-owned slope-side lodging. The 116-room ski-in ski-out hotel and conference center opened this fall with a pub, restaurant, heated pool and hot tub and fitness center and views of the mountain on one side and Willoughby Gap on the other.

### Family fun

Resorts continue to add activities for visitors other than skiing and riding. This summer, Vermont's Stowe Mountain Resort opened a roughly \$20 million adventure center that includes ski and ride programs for kids, a daycare program, a rock-climbing center, shops, and family friendly dining looking out over the outdoor ice skating rink and the indoor climbing center. The rock-climbing center has 16 climbing stations and a free-standing 40-foot climbing tower.

On the other side of Mount Mansfield, Smugglers' Notch is also boosting its amenities for families, building a 26,000-square-foot Fun Zone that's expected to open in March 2017. It will include a two-floor laser tag arena, mini-golf, a 30-foot double-sided climbing wall, a slot-car track and a cafe. At Omni Mount Washington Resort in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, the winter season programming includes trails for fat biking (bikes with oversized tires that can handle snow and mud). — AP



In this file photo, the Lodge at Burke Mountain is pictured on the day it officially opened in East Burke, Vt. — AP photos

## Utah ski resorts offering backcountry-type opportunities

Utah resorts still want skiers and snowboarders to come enjoy their groomed slopes and high-speed lifts this season, but they're also offering expanded options for people who want to get a taste of the backcountry without the risk of going alone. New opportunities include a pair of new lifts at Powder Mountain Resort that open 5,000 acres of powder skiing through trees, and a new luxury cat-skiing operation at Whisper Ridge in northern Utah on 60,000 acres. Ski Utah is also widening its marketing of a long-running guided tour that takes in the back country near six resorts in one day.

The appetite for exploring beyond the boundaries of resorts has been growing in recent years. An estimated 5.7 million skiers and snowboarders ventured into the backcountry in 2015-2016 - up 34 percent from 2008-2009 ski season, according to research from SnowSports Industries America. A large chunk of those people went into the "side country" areas connected to resorts that resemble backcountry.

Utah ski resorts are hoping to repeat last year's banner season in which they parlayed good early-winter snow and buzz created by Vail Resort's new mega-resort into a 10-year high for visitors. Several of the state's 14 ski resorts are hoping to open in November to kick off season, though a lack of early season snow could make that difficult. Here's a look at what's new this year, including several of the new options for backcountry-like experiences.

### Powder Mountain: New lifts, new terrain

Powder Mountain Resort's new lifts give skiers and snowboarders access to 10 new groomed runs on about 1,000 new acres. It also allows skiers to explore some 5,000

new acres of rugged terrain in a bowl that before was only accessible by all-day guided snow cat operations. Skiers can get to the runs off the lifts, but must pay an additional \$25 (or \$20 for season pass-holders) to take a snow cat ride out of the bowl each time they ski down. Regular lift tickets cost \$79 for adults.

The terrain is ideal for beginner and intermediate skiers who want to practice powder and tree skiing, said JP Goulet, Powder Mountain spokesman. The lifts and 6 miles of new roads connect the existing resort to the site where Powder Mountain's owners - a group of young, wealthy entrepreneurs, nonprofit leaders and artists who purchased the resort in 2013 - are planning to build a New Age mountain town. Built around a vehicle-free main street, they tout the community as a rethink of the American mountain town with homes, pop-up stores, micro apartments, farm-to-table restaurants and yoga boot camps. Work has begun, but the project is expected to take several years.

Powder Mountain, about 50 miles northeast of Salt Lake City, is also limiting day tickets to 2,000 per day so they can offer skiers and snowboarders uncrowded slopes. Deer Valley is the only other ski resort that has a set limit for daily skiers, though other resorts turn people away when parking lots get full, said Paul Marshall, spokesman for Ski Utah.

### Luxury cat skiing

For skiers with plenty of money who are looking to get totally off the grid, Whisper Ridge Cat Skiing offers 60,000 acres of private terrain to carve through in the day and the option to spend nights at luxury yurts. The operation, located about 85 miles

northeast of Salt Lake City, uses modified snow cats to carry skiers up and down the hills.

Day rates are \$450 per person in the early and late season and \$495 during the heart of winter. Yurt lodging rates range from \$725-\$1,000 a night depending on the type of yurt and dates. It is not the first cat skiing operation in Utah. Park City Powder Cats has been around for years. It offers rates of \$549-\$569 per day, depending on the dates. Alta, Powder Mountain and Snowbird also are offering cat skiing packages.

### One day, six resorts

Ski Utah's long running "Interconnect Tour" has a developed a loyal group of customers who come back, but officials are hoping to entice skiers who may be among those tempted to ski more in backcountry terrain, Marshall said. The guided tour, which costs \$395 per person, takes skiers down backcountry routes near six different Utah resorts, starting at Deer Valley near Park City and finishing at Snowbird in the Little Cottonwood Canyon. The tour usually takes participants about 25 miles and down about 16,000 vertical feet.

Guides carry rescue beacons and take other safety measures needed in the backcountry. Skiers must be 16 or older and must be advanced skiers. No snowboarders are allowed. "It offers a taste of what the backcountry is about with the assistance of guides who know the terrain and area so well," Marshall said. "It's a great way to kind of put your toes in the water." — AP



File photo shows heavy snow blanketing skiers as they ride the gondola from the parking lot to the base of the mountain at Canyons Village ski area in Park City, Utah. — AP photos



File photo shows skiers pay the price for late season turns at Alta, Utah, as they hike up the mountain.

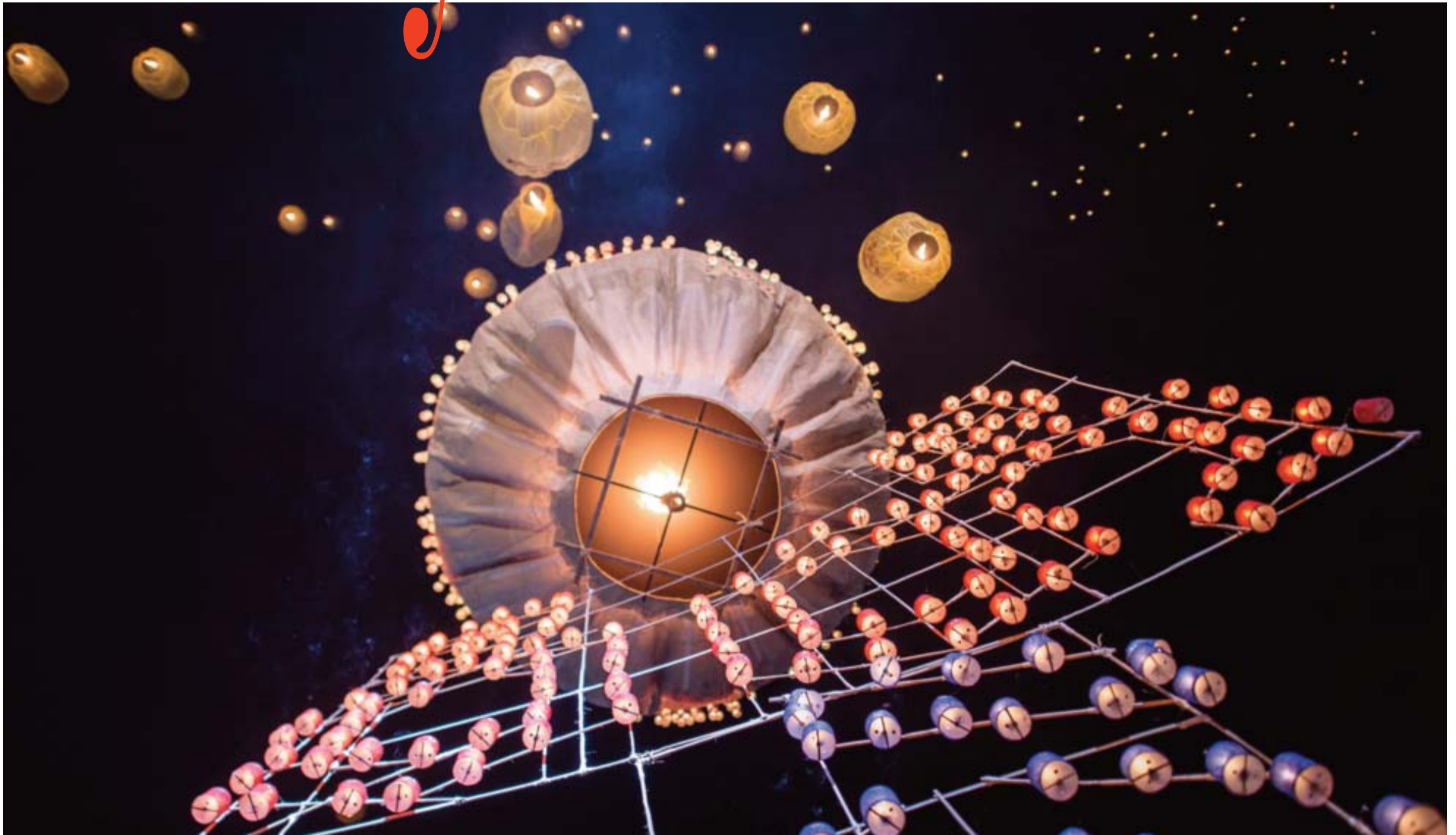


# Lifestyle

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2016

A touch of 'Game of Thrones' magic on small Spanish town

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Participants release hot-air balloons carrying small lanterns during the closing ceremony of the Tazaungdaing Festival at Taunggyi, in Myanmar's northeastern Shan State, on Tuesday. The skies of central Myanmar were set ablaze this week with the beginning of the Taunggyi fire balloon festival, one of the most beautiful and dangerous celebrations in Asia. Brightly coloured balloons with hundreds of homemade fireworks woven into their frames are sent soaring into the night sky, showing down cascades of sparks onto adoring crowds. — AFP

## Door-to-door book salesman takes his knocks in Saudi Arabia



A picture shows Indian salesman John displays explaining material about a children's learning program he offers for sale, during a demonstration of his sales pitch in the Saudi capital Riyadh. — AFP photos



Indian salesman John Gunti leaving after visiting a customer in a business district in the Saudi capital Riyadh.

In Saudi Arabia where many people spend a big chunk of their lives online, like elsewhere in today's world, John Gunti seems like a relic from a bygone era. The Indian national knocks on doors in the business district of the Saudi capital Riyadh, hoping to sell a 22-volume World Book Encyclopedia that weighs about 25 kilograms (55 pounds). Even though times are tough in an oil-dependent economy where everyone is cutting back, Gunti says: "Cold calling is my passion." But what would anybody want with such a tome these days, when every question can be answered on a smartphone? As a direct marketer, rather than just a static display in a bookshop, he is always ready to explain.

"You'll ask me 100 questions. I'll answer your 100 questions," says Gunti, 47, who carries fold-out promotional material in a smart black satchel to help his pitch. After 11 years in the business, and prior experience in medical diagnostic sales back home, Gunti says it doesn't matter what product is being sold. "If you want to sell a stone, you can sell it. If you want to sell sand, you can sell it. What matters is attitude: I have to sell this product," he says. Still, Gunti believes books have their place, even though sales have slumped to almost nothing.

### Lonely business

Gone are the days when his company, Pioneer House, had about 20 salesmen, all of them from South Asia, who even came to blows over customers. Not the fast-talking Gunti, though. He says he never relied on fists but only on his power of persuasion. Gunti once had three or four salesmen under him and got a share of their income as well as his own. "I worked on commission all these years."

The more prosperous era ended about two years ago, coinciding with the collapse in Saudi Arabia's oil revenues and ensuing cutbacks throughout the economy.

"It was good some time ago but now... the demand has gone down," leaving only Gunti and one other Pioneer House salesman hunting for customers. According to him, theirs is the last surviving Riyadh firm in this business. Gunti depends on the roughly 25-percent share he earns on each 2,000 riyal (\$533) World Book Encyclopedia set he sells. He also offers the more costly Encyclopedia Britannica, children's encyclopedias and multimedia educational programs from which he also gets a cut. "There were times where I sold five encyclopedias or six encyclopedias a month," says the well-spoken Gunti, glasses perched atop his head.

"The ideal ratio is that if you make five presentations, you need to close one deal." Now it takes 100 meetings to make a sale, so "you need to make more effort to meet more people," he says. "Ninety-nine percent are 'nos.'" Some of his business comes from referrals but most of his time is spent on cold calls.

### Tough times

He rides elevators up and down the towers of Olaya Street and King Fahad Road in Riyadh's business district, ringing doorbells. Experience tells him who to target. "If I go to an office I don't just approach every person there." Gunti, who speaks some Arabic but makes his pitch in English, says he has the best luck with Jordanians, Syrians, Egyptians and Palestinians from among the millions of expatriate workers in the kingdom. Saudis and other Arabs are less likely buyers. "I'll approach and I'll

introduce myself in a friendly way so that he gets friendly with me," Gunti says.

"Then I start my pep talk and get his background about his children and their ages and everything. "Then in my mind I decide what (product) to present to him, so accordingly I'll make a presentation. "Then I'll close the deal." That is the tricky part-getting a stranger to part with 2,000 riyals. "It all depends on how you make your presentation," says Gunti. "He buys because of John, not because of the product, not because of the company. Because of trust in John."

Every customer asks why he should buy the printed encyclopedia, to which Gunti answers: "A book is more comfortable" than online and "has its place." The salesman says he enjoys a job where he can help children learn, and he still believes "there is a big market". But the kingdom's economic slowdown has left him barely getting by. "It's (a) tough time for me," Gunti admits, his business shirt showing signs of wear. "I'm unable to send any money back home" to his wife and two grown daughters in Hyderabad. "This month I may earn only 2,000 riyals. Or even there were times I earned only 1,500 riyals." He doesn't know how much longer he can keep going. "I'm really planning to quit," he says. "I have plenty of talents-people skills and presentation ability-that could be useful elsewhere." But Gunti firmly believes that, far from dying out, door-to-door sales is something that will survive economic downturns. "Door-to-door is a system," he says. "Direct marketing will never die." — AFP

## TYCOON HOSTS BIG, FAT INDIAN WEDDING AMID CASH CRUNCH

A controversial Indian mining tycoon has taken over a royal palace and flown in Brazilian dancers at a reported cost of \$75 million to celebrate his daughter's wedding, as the country reels from a cash crisis. Up to 50,000 people are expected at the sprawling Bangalore Palace, a mock Tudor castle in southern India, to celebrate the wedding of Gali Janardhan Reddy's daughter, who was married in a Hindu ceremony earlier in the day. Local media criticized the extravagance at a time when many Indians are struggling to find the cash to eat after the government's shock move to pull high-value notes out of circulation in a bid to tackle tax evasion.

But one associate defended the lavish expenditure, saying Reddy wanted people to remember the wedding of his only daughter. "It is unfortunate that a daughter's wedding has been made an issue out of envy and rivalry," Manju Swamy told AFP ahead of the party. "It's an important moment for her parents and they wanted to celebrate the event in a way that befits the family's status in society." India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced last week that 500 and 1,000 rupee (\$7.50, \$15) bills — 85 percent of the cash in circulation — would cease to be legal tender. Indians can change a limited number of old notes for new ones at banks and post offices, but there have been huge queues

since they reopened last Thursday after closing for a day following the announcement.

Indians rely heavily on cash for their daily transactions and those living in rural areas or who do not have bank accounts have been particularly hard hit. The 49-year-old Reddy, a former minister with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the southern state of Karnataka, spent three years in jail for his alleged involvement in a mining scam before he was released on bail last year. Speaking to journalists in his home town last week, he refused to reveal how much he was spending on the celebrations, but said everything would be declared to the tax authorities.

Guests received their invitations on LCD devices and the party venue reportedly includes a mock-up of the helium balloons featuring images of the Reddy family are reported to be floating above the palace. Indian activist T. Narasimha Murthy put the cost of the wedding at five billion rupees (about \$75 million), a figure that tallied with local media reports. "Reddy has hired about 3,000 bouncers and security guards to prevent media and activists like me from barging into the venue," said Murthy, adding he had petitioned local tax authorities to investigate. — AFP



The moon rises over an illuminated wooden boat making the way along the Tonle Sap river for a boat race in front of the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Monday, during the annual water festival. The three-day festival that dedicates to the kingdom's ancestral naval warriors coincides with the phenomenon known as the super-moon, the brightest moon in almost 69 years, on Monday. — AP